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THE
FAWN OF SERTORIUS.

VOL. I.

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E. Lambol, Robert Lysons

THE
FAWN OF SERTORIUS.

Lambol

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THE
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THERE is some embarrassment in accounting for a narrative which has two editors, and perhaps two authors. But it will be easily disentangled by this first chapter. My responsibility extends no farther than to the end of it, and the reader

may then proceed without stopping at the usual prefatory barriers for any additional information. Perhaps he cares nothing about the authenticity of that which is submitted to him : if so, the second chapter will be his proper starting-place. On the other hand, if he should wish to distinguish between Truth and Fable, History and Romance, he may learn what I learnt, and in the same manner. Let him place himself under my guidance during a few minutes, and accompany me in an excursion which, if it fail to entertain, will hardly last long enough to fatigue.

The three summer months are usually spent by me at a country residence of my cousin and brother-in-law. His jaded familiarity with the principal cities of Europe, and the weariness which he once experienced from official reserve, render him now the more domestic. Fortunately his tastes and habits correspond with the exactions of a large family. But it was far from Italy that he acquired his love of home, and the daily enjoyment which he feels in adding to its embellishments. There we may find an exactness of elegance and propriety too little cared for on our side the Alps. I am not permitted to authenticate this account by the publication of his name; beside a dislike to notoriety, some excess in the

freedom of his opinions should render his friends more circumspect than he has lately been himself. The truth is, that instead of again travelling to Vienna or St. Petersburg, to Paris or London, he indulges in fanciful excursions far wider than these, conversing with Brutus on Patriotism, or with Cicero on Eloquence. Too much despising the littleness and feebleness which he can neither strengthen nor amplify, his heart wanders eighteen or nineteen hundred years back, that he may communicate boldly with the free, and loftily with the illustrious.

My own name would betray his, or otherwise it should be divulged as an authority, not in support of opinions, but of facts. The reader, however, careless about apologies true or false, will accompany me in my midsummer's visit of the last year.

There is a pleasing conformity between the character of my relative and his house: both are airy, cheerful, tranquil, unostentatious; with space enough in them for variety without disorder; the parts irregular but not incongruous; the whole substantial rather than stately, and far from inelegant, though plain. This plainness easily admits the ornaments of fine taste tamed and disciplined to the general sobriety. Had he been his own

architect, or had his residence been purchased by him because it was adapted to his turn of mind, we could better have accounted for such a correspondence; but he succeeded in it to twenty progenitors, and he has been studious that neither his additions nor his alterations should transgress the modest demands of present convenience. It was his great-grandfather who selected the most valuable of the pictures, his grandfather who built the music-room and furnished the library. That long and spacious terrace on which they open, with its wide flight of thirteen steps at either end; every part, excepting its urns and balustrades, must have been coeval with the edifice. How otherwise could gardens, descending to so great a depth beneath its foundations, and planted on the side of so steep a hill, have been reached by its inhabitants?

Supposing other things to be equal, and no accidental annoyance to have interposed, the happiest week in the year is the first week of your release from a busy and disputatious capital, and your arrival at a house like this. The happiest hour of that week is the breakfast hour next morning. You have been awakened, after so long a journey, from slumbers proportionably refreshing, by the song of birds, and the fragrance of orange-flowers under your bed-room

window. Little hands have been extended to you as you passed the nursery door, mirthful greetings have followed you during your descent down stairs, or were waiting for you at the bottom of them. And now the table is surrounded by eyes and lips, every one of which seems eager with something pleasant to ask, or gay to communicate. After breakfast, you remember that you have outrun the post, that no letters can pursue you till another week, that your portfolio is unpacked, your graver studies undetermined, and that you have a right to some days of repose unrepurchased as idleness.

The only change in our last year's party, so reluctantly forsaken by me, is the addition of two younger cousins hitherto unknown. Three months hence, I may be no better able to determine which is the most celestial, Francesca's complexion, or Caterina's voice. Every thing here, like our host's disposition and habitation, has its happy correspondence; and yet how widely dissimilar are the first days of such a visit and the last!

Whatever carelessness he may affect, this host is certain to be thinking, at such a time, of his recent improvements, his plans projected or accomplished, his advantageous purchase, or his still more fortunate acquisition without expense. At

the sacrifice of no more than one barren acre, there is a new walk extended through the stone quarry to his vineyard, and ending below the fountain which supplies his house. There is a small Doric porch added to the old garden-pavilion, with its ox-head entablature sculptured by his Castaldo's son. Be the occasion or the execution what it may, no doubt must be felt about the economy. This time I was conducted to a painted window, hardly yet complete, above the great altar of my kinsman's parish church. A monument with its statue in bas-relief, erected to the memory of his eldest daughter, was another novelty which might have demanded my admiration; but the father passed it twice hastily, and I silently.

On our return, we ascended the terrace at its eastern end; seated ourselves occasionally where our prospect was unobstructed by cedars and cypresses overtopping the parapet from the garden beneath; then continued our walk and our discussion to the opposite extremity of this long promenade and the corresponding flight of steps. Behold, these are already occupied by the ladies, as cooler than their gallery, and more airy than the music-room! Ten such days have again reconciled our thoughts to shady walks and garden seats overhung by lime trees. Never were seats

more shady, nor lime trees more fragrant. Here, too are collected, at present, accommodations for the idle, mats, cushions, and rustic-stools. White lilies and white jasmin, have resumed their ancient contention for superiority in sweetness; the later kind of woodbines are unquestionably more delicate than the earlier, which they have superseded, strewing the parapet with their blossoms, or affording an insecure resting-place to the bee.

Fresh as the morning is, it is so calm that half-closed parasols hang motionless between the balustrades. Bonnets have ceased to shade the fairest of faces, that they may ornament those four lions' heads carved in granite, which guard so faithfully the steps above and below with open mouths. Only the graver part of our society is thus assembled. Not one face younger than fifteen or sixteen remains stationary here; but frequent embassies approach us from the walks beneath bearing suitable presents in diminutive baskets. Every violet has disappeared; hardly could one wild strawberry be preserved so late for the celebration of Laura's birth-day and my arrival. St. Nicomede claims this double festival at church, and in the Almanack; but here it is also held to

the honour of Laura, and, on the present occasion, of myself.

Below this stately promenade, there is a succession of narrower and more irregular terraces—walks winding among yew trees and box trees. Concealed like birds'-nests in the most sequestered nooks, here are those little flower-plots to which the gardener is a stranger; hollows and recesses extorted from the rock; mossy couches sheltered against sun and wind; diminutive properties on which no uninvited footstep may encroach. Less in extent than our breakfast-room table, they are claimed by heirship from the nursery. Every babe is a freeholder; and each has its own peculiar system of cultivation with which no man may interfere.

A small but rapid and sparkling river separates these walks from the meadows and the corn-fields. The later herbage of a season so backward till now, remains yet abroad. We still hear, even at so great a distance, the ringing of the mower's scythe, and the shrill laugh of some frolicksome haymaker.

“We go far to visit scenes richer and grander than this,” said I, “more powerful on the imagination, more impressive on the memory; some of them glorious for their history or their architecture; others diversified by forests and torrents,

wider rivers, and loftier mountains. But where is it that we shall find tranquillity so cheerful, repose so gay, rural life so elegant, and a pure taste so safe from offence? Thus, too, our modern habitations are easily surpassed in magnificence by those of less cultivated ages and countries. Grandeur is not inconsistent with grossness. Civilization is best shown by its refinements; and those rather in the propriety and economy of our customs, than of the arts which embellish them."

A challenge like this is certain of acceptance from my brother-in-law. "So would say the milliner, who had been educated in the Corso, on her return from beyond the walls. Where could she find tranquillity so cheerful, repose so gay, or a pure taste so safe from offence? Not in the suburbs. Even if those tastes were less effeminate, our genius and hers could hardly suffice to qualify us as tailors to J. Cæsar, or mantua-makers to Cleopatra. We are little creatures with views and feelings appropriate to our insignificance. The butterfly is better pleased with a wall-flower than a cedar tree; and a wise mouse prefers my corn-bin to all the catacombs in Egypt. I question not the prudence which makes us content with our condition, with what we have, and what we are. Such were the wisdom of a squirrel on

Christmas day ; he has nuts in plenty, and is more than half asleep. Nevertheless all these are small animals, and so are we."

" But by what standard should we measure your greatness and littleness?" was my reply. " Is it material or spiritual? A lover of paradoxes, and almost proud of your suspense between scepticism and credulity, how do you justify this school-boy admiration for so cruel a people—the least sensitive and fanciful among mankind? What is there even in their superstitions which the Romans did not borrow or inherit? You who maintain that all history is essentially false, how happens it that you should have indulged such idolatrous reverence for these granite statues roughly hewn in imitation of the Greek marble, and animated to great achievements by no better or nobler effluence than the breath of pride? However they may have been transmitted, half at least of those early fables with which their historians have amused us, may be traced to the sacred Scriptures. They had, indeed, prodigies of their own, or from the Etruscans. Their oxen were good grammarians, and spoke, perhaps, purer Latin than was spoken by their tribunes; but can you remember one tale or legend unborrowed which is worth your repetition?"

“ I might,” said my friend, “ after you have ascertained what was, and what was not, borrowed even by the Greeks, or, if you please to descend two thousand years later still, by our own Giovanni Boccacci. Distinguish between the learning of Ovid and his invention. Then determine for me how much did Apuleius find in Grecian fable or elsewhere of his Cupid and Psyche. As for these rough idols of mine, let me remind you that the four remaining poets most elegant and highly bred, from Homer to Petrarca, from Petrarca to the present hour ; the most graceful in thought, polished in language, and fastidious in metre, were so nearly of the same age that one apartment in Rome may possibly have contained them all ; some while children, others before old age. Yet Catullus, Virgil, Horace, and Ovid were distinguished from their countrymen rather by their genius than their refinement, and not much from Tibullus and Propertius by either. We will let this pass ; you require some tale to compare with our Gothic superstitions. In all beside sacred literature, the most terrible apparition since the world began, and till age had destroyed its testimonies, the best authenticated, is that of Julius Cæsar at Philippi. Nor do I stop here.

Plutarch is pleased to represent the Fawn of Sertorius as a politic deception; yet why, unless it were necessary that Plutarch should maintain his credit as a philosopher? The account given of her by Sallust has perished. There are, however, some reasons recently discovered for supposing that Caius Oppius, another historian better informed than either, thought differently. You believe in numberless truths much more difficult to prove than the story of this Fawn, which you do not believe. She was seen by twenty thousand Romans of all ranks from senators to soldiers, — she was seen by them in broad daylight on twenty different occasions, and her appearance was always followed by the event foretold. But it was an artifice, a stratagem, forsooth! Supposing that the wildest of animals, and the most timid, could have been disciplined in fraud, how happened the result to accord so uniformly with the prediction?"

"A fawn? what is a fawn?" exclaimed the two or three youngest of my nieces.

"I have seen the picture of a fawn killed by hunters among the mountains," said Caterina; "but what fawn was this? and who was Sertorius?"

"There is a history of both more circum-

stantial than that given by Plutarch," replied their father, "and yet I know nothing certain about its author, in what language it was originally written, whether it be ancient or modern, false or true."

"Plutarch," said I, "has often excited a thirst for other information by the life of Sertorius which he left us. It is calculated to do little else than stimulate and disappoint curiosity. Nothing can be more irreconcilable than the events, or incongruous than the characters; but I was ignorant of any other history."

"There have been, at least, three such histories," was the reply; "one by Livy, one by Sallust, and one by Oppius. The wars in Spain were dangerous enough to the Republic for others besides these. Of Livy I will say nothing: we must suppose that he afforded them no more than the space proportionable to so wide a plan, and that he necessarily abridged the particulars first communicated by the other two. All this part of his history has perished. But Sallust and Oppius were the contemporaries of Sertorius, though younger men; they *may* have been of his acquaintances; their histories *must* have been read by thousands who were opposed to him as public enemies, or connected with him as personal and

political partisans. Patricians, senators, illustrious both through their genius and their alliances, Sallust and Oppius were in no danger of neglect.

“ Sallust left a History of Sertorius, similar to his Wars of Jugurtha, and his Conspiracy of Catiline ; a history unmixed with any larger subject. C. Oppius, the friend of Julius Cæsar, wrote a biographical narrative, which may have been still more personal, precise, and circumstantial, and if so, more valuable. No doubt the corresponding books of Livy, who lived fifty years later, were collected from these.

“ Plutarch also had access to the same oracles. But the original histories have disappeared till now, and even now I hardly venture to hope that either of them has been recovered. Yet there is a narrative in my possession which professes to have been derived from that of C. Oppius.”

“ On whose testimony ? ” said I.

“ Let me confess that it is a suspicious one, even to myself,” was the answer. “ I must introduce my authority unshackled by any responsibilities. It is necessary that you should learn the manner in which this history of Sertorius and his fawn was brought to light ; and first, that you should become acquainted with a

little Bolognese ecclesiastic called Giraldo Ercole Cornacchini.

“ There are men whom we never see without pleasure, and yet never think of when they are not seen. Among a thousand acquaintances, they leave neither friendships, nor remembrances, nor impressions of any kind. Like agreeable dreams, we forget that they have occurred till they return again; well-disposed, well-behaved, well-recommended men, but unsubstantial as their own shadows. You may find them, after the lapse of years, in some new spot, and the apparition pleases, without surprising you. Every place is as suitable, and as probable, as the last or the next. Such was Giraldo Cornacchini, who may have been encountered in almost all the capitals of Europe, and in any one of them at least as much at home as at Bologna. He had been attached to petty embassies; he had been entrusted with negotiations between great houses at a distance from each other; he had discharged the duties of chaplain in one city, of almoner in another, of controller or secretary in a third. Familiar with several languages, he kept the European citizenship of his tongue in continual exercise. Perhaps some noble lady had occasion for his conduct that she might join her father or

husband at Paris, Vienna, or Madrid; perhaps some illustrious youth was to be transferred from his college to his parents, or from his parents to his college. No man's manners were more blameless than Giraldo's, no man's prudence deserved greater confidence. Both church and state employed him in those subordinate missions which require less of sagacity than of discretion. He and I were old friends with defective memories; we have met unexpectedly in distant cities ten times at least, and once we were domesticated in the same house. Let me confess that at no other time did I retain the faintest trace of his existence.

“Wherever he went, his first visits were to the libraries, museums, and other similar repositories. Claiming a descent from the sculptor Cornacchini, he inherited no skill whatever in the same pursuits; but as soon as graver duties had been despatched, all his devotion turned to the literature of his country. It rewarded the fatigue of his journeys, and became the business, as well as the recreation of his life. Antiquarian treasures were every where unlocked to him, for the whole generation of guardians were his brethren when he appeared; though, like the brethren of Joseph, they lived on carelessly and forgetfully till then.

In requital, he had much to communicate. No one knew better where a duplicate medal might be purchased — what price was sufficient for the third impression from a broken copper-plate — whether such or such a MS. had an entire title-page. He became the medium through which one grave functionary could communicate with another; the negotiator in whose discretion and integrity every one might confide.

“ Not many days could have elapsed between your own departure from us last autumn and his arrival. During some years I had neither seen him, nor heard of him, nor thought about him; but I should have felt as much like amazement or embarrassment at your re-appearance as at his. He might be encountered every where else in the world; and why not here? No more than a moment's resting-place for the foot of my long-lost dove! This visit was hastily borrowed from another engagement. It made a diversion in his way to Vienna with the Neapolitan ambassador's youngest son. Only one entire day could be spared to me: even during this one day, other guests demanded so much of my attention, that we were seldom alone.

“ He found barely time enough to explain that his researches had been rewarded by a dis-

covery which, as he said, no man could better appreciate than myself. In a place the least probable, and in the centre of other manuscripts totally unconnected with it, was hidden the 'Life of Quintus Sertorius by Caius Oppius.' Giraldo was wise enough to conceal his good fortune till he could not be defrauded of it. The proprietors of the treasury in which it was deposited, might otherwise have reclaimed his discovery. He could retain his title and enjoy his triumph no longer than he could hold his peace. He was at liberty to copy and collate, to spend whole mornings among the printed books, and the books which never will be printed, while there was nothing worth finding that he could carry away. According to the moral system interpreted by himself, the honour of Giraldo was scrupulous in excess. Ten times might he have appropriated the whole history of Sertorius from end to end undetected and unsuspected; or he might have found time to transcribe the greater part of it, and thus have removed no more than his own labours. The first was a theft, the second an evasion! No farther licence had been permitted than notes, translations, and abridgements. So punctilious was my little friend, that he determined to carry away with him a clear con-

science, and not one syllable of the history. The dignity which rewarded this resolution was uncompromised by some larger indulgence than usual in those privileges which were conceded. He extracted, he abridged, he wrote notes of his own, he filled chapters from the MS.; yet all this was done in his native tongue. Not one word of the original did he appropriate. He even took pains that the arrangement, as well as the language, should be changed; that there should be no formal resemblance, historical or biographical. The modest man was content to collect every event related, every character described, and, as he assured me impressively, every particular at all worth his care. He has the flesh, the blood, the bones, the heart and its appurtenances, leaving the animal otherwise entire. ‘By these means,’ said he, ‘I secure to myself the first fruits of a discovery which, without me, never might have been made. The original will lose no part of its value through that impost which I levy as due to me for a second existence. A work by C. Oppius, the friend of Julius Cæsar, must command attention from every scholar, and every pretender to scholarship. By my indication the proprietors will learn that they are, indeed, such; and that after having opened for them this mine of gold,

I have left its wealth undiminished. Some months have been employed by me in giving form and consistency to my materials. I have preferred a different arrangement, and prefixed a more appropriate title. The truth of every particular, extending from facts and characters to opinions and explanations, will soon be attested by the original. It is unnecessary to tell you that my language, learnt in a provincial nursery, has been still farther depraved by many barbarous intermixtures from abroad. Let me leave what I have written in your hands for such corrections as it must require, till my return from Vienna. Oblige me by adding what is deficient, and suppressing all that may appear to be superfluous. Our tastes and pursuits have been much alike, but you have enjoyed the advantages of scholarship more refined, studies better disciplined and concentrated. At the same moment that I publish the translation, I will announce the original.' ”

“ But are we to believe even so much of his narrative as supposes that there is an original ? ” said I. “ A fashion less prevalent in Italy than in some other countries, prefaces imaginary tales with strange discoveries similar to this. Manuscripts are found in family chests, forsaken or forgotten closets, and thrice sold escritoirs. An-

tiquaries and schoolmasters have died ignorant of the wealth which they left to posterity. There are editors who kindly undertake the patronage of their own labours. As nothing fraudulent is designed, Giraldo may have learnt such stratagems in Paris, London, or Berlin. Some suspicion will attach to originals which have been lost, which have been discovered in improbable places, which have furnished translations from motives and principles stranger still."

"You may add to these objections," said my brother-in-law, "that the style and colouring are often not Roman, though the facts recorded are almost always reconcilable with other authorities. Giraldo's scholarship was confessedly irregular, but he sometimes discovers such ignorance as we do not pardon in an antiquary. It is plain that he must have found somewhere several particulars which, both as translator and commentator, he has misunderstood. The account which he gave me does, indeed, explain how it may have happened that writers long subsequent to Oppius are cited, and that particulars with which Oppius and his contemporaries were familiar are detailed and illustrated. For the work is not offered to us as a translation; it is a dish prepared with the little ecclesiastic's own condiments, though the

chief ingredients were ready for his use. The antiquary is always busy, and he makes no attempt at concealment. He fairly tells us that every part was remodelled and reconstructed by himself. He is neither ashamed of his thefts, nor conscious that they are criminal. References are frequently made to subsequent events, and comparisons instituted with the times in which we live.

“ Giraldo could hardly have escaped the appearance of pedantry which always attaches to such works. There is a slovenly intermixture of ancient and modern languages, of Latin and Italian, of names as they were formerly written, and as they are written at present. My friend is much too careless about such propriety, but he is not censurable for the use of some Latin words which have no equivalents in our own tongue. The translation even of that which it is easy to translate, generally offends. When we call a centurion a captain, a legion a division, a quæstor a treasurer, we multiply our difficulties at the expense of ridicule; for other names and titles must be intermixed with these, which it is impossible to modernise. But I suspect that Giraldo has discoloured a tale which was once simple, and perhaps classical. Every language spoken by him appears to have given something of its own as an indemnification for that which he dropped care-

lessly or rejected ignorantly. It is excusable that the weapons of war, the ornaments and furniture of domestic life, and above all, the gradations of rank, should be ill-explained. But there are also the contaminations from many soils; we perceive vain attempts to strain and purify customs and opinions through the filtering stones of his little learning."

"The genuine work of Oppius will silence all doubts," said I; "and Giraldo has promised that we shall have an opportunity to compare his paraphrase with the original. You may extort the fulfilment of these conditions from him."

"Alas for the authority of our tale, and the calculations of honour or profit!" replied my brother-in-law. "Cornacchini resumed his journey on the following morning, arrived at Munich with his usual good health, and died in his chair three days after. I have been unable to ascertain that he left any other relative beside a married sister, much younger than himself, and now living at Sienna; who like the rest of his acquaintances had never seen him but by accident, and could remember him only with an effort. Notwithstanding all my pains, more of his personal history cannot be collected. The only method by which we may discover whether there is any claimant with a better title to this tale, is the publication

of it. But a far more important result will be accomplished, if, by the same publicity, we can discover the original. Guardians of libraries and museums may be awakened by the particulars which you have heard ; they may remember when Giraldo Ercole Cornacchini was their visitor, and to what part of their depositories his researches were directed."

"By your account, Plutarch has been our single authority hitherto," I observed ; "we may estimate by the life which he has given us of Julius Cæsar, how reluctant are his commendations and how partial his testimony. C. Oppius, the friend as well as the partisan of Cæsar, would console us for every other loss, were we better assured that the narrative in your possession is translated, or even collected, from his. Sallust himself had hardly so many advantages and opportunities ; for Oppius was of the same party with Sertorius."

"Oppius," said my kinsman, "was in Spain as recently as seven or eight years after the death of Sertorius, and we know that such a biographical history was, indeed, written by him. Beyond all question it related as much to the man as to the wars in which he had been engaged. Even the romantic parts of Giraldo's version may not have been inconsistent with the plan proposed, with the religious belief of a barbarous and credulous

people, with traditions so recently received, and so reverentially cherished. Ten years earlier all Spain, and all the armies of Rome on both sides, believed at least as much if not the same."

"What then am I to conclude?" said I.

"That you may examine this manuscript at your leisure," was the answer; "that you may carry it home with you three months hence, and superintend the publication. Neither of us is pledged to its authenticity. Teach the reader what I have taught you. I am answerable for nothing else than a sort of introductory chapter, in which some information is communicated relative to the persons principally concerned. It is hardly so much as a synopsis of that mighty era. The narrative would otherwise have begun too abruptly for readers ignorant of an age which we may call the world's midsummer. Since the death of Giraldo, his labours have been left untouched, because I was unwilling to incur any joint responsibility."

"Where is this manuscript?" said I; "we have a morning of leisure, and the Fawn's history will secure attention as long as it relates to her. No man ever wrote more legibly than yourself, and the first chapter is yours. Whether the edifice were erected by Oppius or Giraldo, I am glad that we must enter it through this new porch."

CHAPTER II.

ARGUMENT.

Rome during less than the last Century of the Republic. — Her Annals comprehend the contemporary History of Mankind. — Sixty or seventy Years between the Battles of Aquæ Sextiæ and Actium, enough for three Civil Wars. — Marius, Sylla, Pompeius, Cæsar, Metellus, Sertorius. — Spain alone in Arms for the Defence of Liberty. — Sertorius the last Champion of both. — Opposed to the Proconsuls, Metellus and Pompeius. — His Resources, his Genius, his Morals, his Love of Peace. — A Comparison with Julius Cæsar. — The Arrival of Perpenna in Spain.

UNDERSTANDING the word *greatness* as it is usually understood, if we were asked at what epoch of the world mankind appeared the greatest, we might limit our reply to those sixty or seventy years which began with Caius Marius at Aquæ Sextiæ, and ended with Marcus Antonius at Actium. Our nature has never been convulsed by passions so lofty, nor has it displayed energies so powerful. Greece, fertile as she was in genius, and in the agitations best calculated for its exercise, could afford no sufficient space. Her drama was sublime, her actors were wonderful, but her theatre was small. The world, as it was

really known to Pericles or Lysander, must have been less, both in population and extent, than Germany at present with its Italian and Hungarian dependencies. Alexander transferred some European fragments to the dominion of Cyrus. As for the still more ancient empires which so speedily extinguished and succeeded each other, one third part of Asia was a world sufficiently spacious to accommodate despots without responsibility, and slaves without character.

But Rome had become the mistress of almost every nation which even yet we consider as civilized—including Greece, her colonies and conquests. For Africa, with Egypt, has lost absolutely since then—and Asia, partially—as much of that light and order which constitute civilization, as Europe has gained. This dominion was so exclusive and authoritative, that none beside Romans ventured to disturb it. Their very names are sufficient to remind us how great must have been her greatest men, in arms, in policy, in eloquence, in wealth—how magnificent their republicanism at home, and how imperious their royalty every where else. Here was room for the tempest of such passions to expend its terrors. While Mithridates could do little else than accumulate treasures for his conqueror, the

whole known world became the stage on which this tragedy of no more than three acts, but a hundred dreadful scenes, was performed in so short a time. Three civil wars, such as never have been exhibited on earth, determined which claimant should assume the empire, and exercise over mankind a contemptuous sovereignty. The field of battle was too large for Italy, or any other single country. Many nations waited as terrified spectators till their master should be ascertained, and while Roman armies encountered each other from Batavia to Ethiopia, from the Euphrates to the Atlantic.

Perhaps at no other period of the world was there so much misery in it. Our ignorance as to the particulars is the best proof of its depth and extent. History was too much occupied about the struggle for any attention to its moral results; but her silence is expressive. In such a tumult, the groans of human nature must have been unheard, and the tears disregarded. At its termination, and as soon as this ruinous tempest had cleared away, arrived the heavenly message of peace and mercy, of reconciliation and good-will.

Our narrative begins at the first interval of this mighty drama. The longest contest of the three, and the most bloody, had ceased in Asia,

Africa, and every part of Europe, excepting Spain. Marius had fallen, Sylla had disappeared. Other tragedians were preparing to occupy the stage with at least equal ability : but they were younger, and, as yet, of inferior reputation. Law had resumed its forms, and in some degree its dominion. Cneius Pompeius was then ostensibly its minister, acting under its authority, and waiting as an assistant, till he could become powerful enough for its overthrow. The far loftier genius of C. J. Cæsar concealed its strength, or amused its idleness, in licentious gallantries, learned subtilties, and party intrigues. Pursuits which require a whole life of labour from any other man, were his recreations when he had nothing else to do. Sometimes he purified and reformed the Roman language. At other times he left it doubtful whether he or Cicero might become the most accomplished orator of that most eloquent age. He had not yet placed himself above all other Roman historians, and all other Roman writers of prose whatever, as the most chaste and elegant. Nor had he commenced the domestic kind of warfare with Pompeius, which took away his rival's wife, and, as an equivalent, substituted his own daughter. But he had defied Sylla in the public streets, at a period when any far less pro-

vocation would have rendered another man unsafe with ten legions at his back, and half the world between. Leisure was never wanting to inflame, and afterwards to excuse, a conspiracy like that of Catiline. How wonderful does it appear that names the most renowned among all nations during eighteen hundred years, should have been then so slightly distinguished from others of their contemporaries! Marius, Sylla, Cinna, Metellus Pius, Sertorius, Crassus, Lucullus, Pompeius, Cæsar, Cato, must have met each other either in the senate-house or the streets. If Cicero had been required to enumerate the twenty greatest men of his own age, he would have placed these ten neither separate from the rest, nor undivided from each other.

It happens that the most eventful era in the annals of mankind has no history. The Conspiracy of Catiline, and the Commentaries of Cæsar are mere episodes. As far as Sertorius is concerned, the lost books of Livy have been supplied by no better authority than that of Plutarch. We have suffered a still greater misfortune till now: the histories of him by Sallust and Oppius must have been more circumstantial, biographical, and communicative. They were written by contemporaries who possessed for them better mate-

rials than for the war with Jugurtha; and who were less likely to have been perverted by personal or political prejudices, than in the conspiracy of Catiline. Wars which required the presence of two proconsular generals, and more than a hundred and twenty thousand veteran soldiers, commanded either by them or their lieutenants, have scarcely five pages of authentic history, unless the following may be received as such. With this very questionable reservation, our safest authority is not the biographer, but the orator, or the poet, or the writer of epistles.

The republic had fallen into such repose as is induced by lassitude after excess, energies exhausted and overstrained: on one side the satiety of conquest intemperately abused; on the other, submission exasperated by hate, and not despairing of revenge. Some six or seven patrician families, by influencing the remainder, governed the senate, and through the senate the world.

Spain alone, distrustful or disdainful of rest like this, remained awake. There the agony was protracted, not only with undiminished might, but with doubtful success. Other nations were relieved at the expense of this. Daring and discontented spirits from every region no longer

tolerant of their presence, assembled there. And beside these, the bravest legions, under the most experienced commanders, had been transferred from Asia, Africa, Greece, and Italy. Yet Spain was nothing more than the second, the subordinate, the auxiliary, even on her own soil. It was her part to afford the field of battle on which these Gods and Titans might contend. She lent her assistance, she offered up her prayers, the strongest of her cities were given for shelter, the bravest of her children for allies: but whichever side might prevail, she was a servant still.

Ancient kingdoms were divided into provinces, and allotted by the conquering people to proconsuls, prætors, proprætors, quæstors, and other subordinate governors. Except from his own countrymen, the lordly Roman could encounter no equal and no hindrance. If he received his authority in the forum, it was his by law; if it were transferred to his competitor, it was still his by justice. In either case he would hold it or regain it if he could.

Metellus Pius commanded the armies of the Republic. As his proconsulship had been not only conferred but renewed by Rome, he enjoyed some advantage over Sertorius among his countrymen, as the more legitimate claimant. In his usur-

pation, he was commissioned by the senate and the people. Having attained to consular dignity, the highest civil, as well as military, ensigns of the Republic were borne before him. His right to such authority was supported by the veteran legions which followed him, — the scarred and seasoned warriors of Sylla, selected from various countries, as their bravest and best disciplined. Metellus was himself grown old among victories; and neither of those two imperious competitors for whom the world had so lately been the prize, was esteemed his superior. Less ambitious, or more patriotic, than Marius and Sylla, — in the field he was equal to either. Age, which had diminished his activity, increased his caution, and confirmed his experience. — All life through, war had been his occupation; and the successful practice of so many years, when it failed to render him victorious, at least protected him from disgrace. Even such skill, with such an army, might fall short of conquest; but in defensive warfare, it appeared to have become invulnerable.

And yet during seven years since his arrival in Spain, he could make no progress. After the expenditure of many legions continually recruited by fresh levies, and of pecuniary supplies from the public treasury profusely renewed, the veteran

general found himself neither so confident nor so forward, as at first. Three quarters of Spain had once rested submissively behind his back — his foot trampled on the fourth. At present, the division between Sertorius and himself is in favour of his opponent. Such a war could not be restricted within the limits of their own superintendence; it was often necessary that both generals should delegate distant operations to other commanders. Even when his movements were directed by Metellus himself, they usually ended either in defeat, or some slight and barren success. Already had he been succoured to no purpose by the prætor Lucius Lollius, from Gallia Narbonensis; Cotta had been beaten at sea, Phidius in Bætica, Domitius, a proconsul, had receded from the farther Spain, and Thoranius had lost his reputation, his army, and his life. However ill-disposed, Rome was forced to believe that, out of six generals, five had yielded before the genius of Sertorius; and that the sixth, Metellus himself, seldom ventured from his camp farther than one day's march. While the senate silently supplied his losses and deficiencies, it was unable to intercept the rumours of them. Sertorius appeared beyond, and not unfrequently behind his more stationary opponent; besieging his cities, surprising his

lieutenants, and intercepting his supplies, at the very moment when they were supposed to be standing face to face. Though never hopeless, Metellus had substituted vigilance for enterprise. — He waited for the caprices of fortune, and the casualties of time. — He watched till, in some moment happy for Rome, the feet which had ventured so far, and amidst such dangerous places, might slip at last. Whenever the urgency was not clamorous, his procrastination had become irresolute, and his irresolution indolent. It was observed by his friends, for the first time, that he now seemed proud of equivocal advantages, pleased with skilful escapes, and sufficiently satisfied if neither side prevailed.

The impatience and indignation of Rome were still farther inflamed by terror. Men are seldom so angry as when they are startled and afraid. He, who with such an army, and during so many campaigns, had gained no battle worth an ovation for himself, might possibly lose one deserving a triumph for his opponent, — and then what would become of Rome! A second Hannibal had accomplished more wonders in Spain than did the first. The Carthaginian, till his descent into Italy, had never contended against such armies or such generals, with means so inadequate as

those of Sertorius. It was decreed that Cn. Pompeius, the favourite of the people, and young as he still was, the highest in their confidence, should support Metellus, not only with his reputation, but with an army proportionable to it. If Metellus had been so long the shield of the Republic, — Pompeius fresh from many victories and two triumphs, was its sword. Some years had elapsed since the title of *great* was added to the name of Pompeius by his African army, and confirmed by Sylla: so familiar had it become among the people, that at last, in acknowledged rivalry with the Macedonian Alexander, it was assumed by himself.

Yet all these mighty expectations seemed likely to disperse. Metellus had been twice consul; both generals had obtained the title of imperator, and both had twice triumphed. Yet two great armies, united under the two most accomplished leaders of the Republic, could do no more than maintain their ground. Pompeius strengthened and sustained Metellus; Metellus succoured, and once, at least, saved Pompeius; but separately, they were defeated by Sertorius; and united, they were unable to defeat him. A vast camp deeply intrenched, and situated at an easy distance from three confederate cities not less strongly

fortified, was safe enough as their asylum when pressed or unsuccessful. It contained the materials of war, and was the centre of their operations. Yet armies so large were necessarily divided, sometimes by the exigences of the provinces to be defended, and still more frequently, by the want of supplies. The lieutenants of Sertorius were repulsed during his absence from the field,—cities were invested which he was too distant to relieve; but for one blow that the confederate generals inflicted, they always received, at least, two, and twice as hard. Nearly three years had been spent in this way, when Pompeius wrote an epistle to the senate, which still remains among the fragments of Sallust. It boasts, indeed, of victory; but it also supplicates vehemently and querulously by turns, for fresh supplies, additional reinforcements, and urges the probability that Sertorius might transfer the war from Spain to Italy. Of the two Republican proconsuls, he had become, by this time, the most dispirited.

Unless there were some better reasons for confidence in the history which will follow than we adduce at present, our account of Quintus Sertorius must rest on no sufficient authority. It is difficult to determine whether the mysterious haze through which we see this wonderful man, increases or

diminishes his grandeur. Wonderful he unquestionably was, not merely from the singularity of his position, but of his character and his fortunes. Whatever Plutarch may tell us, neither Grecian nor Roman history supplies a parallel, or resemblance, or any such thing.

Sertorius had lived in arms, by necessity, not less than twenty years. His youth and manhood, till now, had been spent principally in the field. For it was among camps that the great business of the world, its negotiations, alliances, and intrigues, had been so long transacted. Nevertheless, time had been found by him for some civil distinctions also; and while quite as young, he too, like Julius Cæsar, had awakened the highest expectations by his eloquence. Not only was he a proficient in Grecian literature, but its patron. Perhaps there was little other resemblance between these great contemporaries, than such as must always exist in minds of the same order, and that the highest. Yet Cæsar and Sertorius, in a cruel age, had the same clemency. Their forgiveness was ennobled by the same generous oblivion of offence; and Nature, rather than policy, had conferred the same power to attach all men beside the base. In whatever pursuit their attention was engaged, they were certain to excel. Cæsar

had the advantage of nobler birth, greater wealth, and more powerful connexions. Living so long between the forum and the senate-house, he occupied a conspicuous position in the presence of his countrymen, where every Roman could compare him with his compatriots. His growth had not been overshadowed by older and loftier occupants of the soil. Following Sertorius at the distance of eighteen or nineteen years, he rose at the most advantageous interval, as a successor to Marius in soldiership, and to Sylla in policy. Sertorius, on the contrary, had been too young for competition with them, and too near for independence. Though nobly born, he was neither rich, nor powerful, nor otherwise distinguished than by his merits. Unlike Cæsar, he became the single fragment of a ruined party. Instead of preparing for universal empire by dividing the world, he was an exile proscribed by the senate, and dreaded by the populace. So desperate, at one time, were his fortunes, that Metellus had even ventured to set a price on the head of this outlawed fugitive. He who, seven years later, was expected in Italy, had been valued at a hundred talents of silver and twenty thousand acres of land!

Despite of these disadvantages, Sertorius was the pride and hope of Spain. It was not with

any other Roman that the Spaniards loved to compare him, but with Hannibal, the terror of Rome. They imagined a resemblance in their characters, their fortunes, and even their countenances. Both were scarred by wounds, both had lost an eye. In this particular, Sertorius stood alone; he had no country, he had not even the encouragement or consolation which every other conqueror has derived from the party calling itself by that name. Hannibal was the champion of Carthage, Alexander of Greece, Scipio, Sylla, Marius, and Cæsar, had with them a part, at least, of their countrymen, on whose affections they could look back. Not one man in Rome dared openly to propose himself as the advocate of this ruined and proscribed fugitive, who suffered for liberty. The populace, which had so constantly adhered to Marius in misfortune, transferred all their partialities, from the best and the most faithful of his generals, to Pompeius.

Sertorius was without a home, and yet, assuredly, beside his love of peace, his strong domestic affections must have the best deserved one. The licentiousness of Cæsar could hardly have been exceeded by his genius. Pompeius, that he might contract an ambitious marriage with the pregnant and reluctant wife of another senator, had divorced

Antistia, whose father perished in his defence, and whose mother threw away her own life rather than survive a husband's loss, and a daughter's dishonour. Nothing in history is more cruel than this. It is recorded of Sertorius that the purity of his morals chastened the conversation of his friends, and introduced good order among his soldiers. Not one vice is imputed to him, nor one habit inconsistent with the dignity and refinement of later ages. After every victory, he asked no more than a private station in Rome. He repeated his preference for the privileges of a citizen, in his own country, without power, to universal sovereignty. But in that age, as no man trusted another's moderation, such virtue was incredible.

There is another particular which distinguishes him. Sertorius had not found, and skilfully applied, the instruments of his glory, but he had created them. Plutarch describes the irregularity of his system, the sudden appearance and disappearance of his forces, the rapidity with which his Spanish auxiliaries assembled, dispersed, and re-assembled, eluding, surprising, and, sometimes, defeating their conquerors. Against four Roman generals, who commanded a hundred and twenty thousand foot, six thousand horse, two thousand

archers and slingers, drawing their supplies from fortified cities too numerous for computation, the proscribed exile began his wars with nineteen hundred Roman soldiers, seven hundred African, four thousand light-armed Lusitanians, and seven hundred horse. His cities amounted to twenty. One legion of Metellus might, at that time, in a stationary battle, have defied his whole army.

Little confidence could have been felt by him in the fidelity of such barbarous allies. Even after a long succession of victories over Metellus and his lieutenants, almost all Spain deserted her champion, and transferred her allegiance to Pompeius the Great. Dazzled and terrified by this favourite of Sylla, the larger cities revolted from their deliverer. Only the north-western principalities, situated among the Pyrenees, retained their fidelity. Yet once more did Sertorius reconquer, either with his arms or his clemency, all that he had lost. He again appeared at the head of forces scarcely less numerous than those opposed to him, though always greatly inferior in weight, solidity, and discipline. A third part only was Roman. On one occasion, he had compelled Metellus to shelter himself in Gaul. Many of his battles were not fought for victory, but for purposes as well accomplished by pre-arranged and

harmless defeat ; to relieve his allies, to distract his enemies, or to divert the pressure of war elsewhere. But never once was he conquered, in any proper sense of that word, even for a day.

We can hardly imagine what might have been our comparative estimate of J. Cæsar and Q. Sertorius, if Cæsar had perished, with his *Commentaries*, in the Nile, or Sertorius had lived twelve months longer. Sertorius has left us no commentaries, and it is impossible that our judgments should remain uninfluenced from the event ; but the wars in Gaul were considered less important, and of less danger to the republic than those in Spain. When Cæsar marched into the provinces which the senate, the people, and the friendship of Pompeius had allotted to him, it was not that he might encounter 120,000 Roman soldiers commanded by Metellus. Sertorius arrived in Spain as an exile with no more than two broken galleys : his soldiers were either barbarians or fugitives like himself : in all his wars there he had to encounter the bravest legions and the most accomplished generals of the Republic. If Cæsar defeated Pompeius, so did he ten times. Metellus was not present at Pharsalia, nor were the legions of Pompeius assembled there comparable, either in discipline or numbers, to those

which the proconsuls had commanded jointly at Sucro. One truth is beyond dispute—no man ever lived who has accomplished against such opponents, with such instruments, so much as did Sertorius.

At present we must consider him rather encumbered than assisted by Perpenna, a senator of high birth, vast fortune, and the most preposterous pretensions. This man had become the partisan of Marius only because he was despised and disappointed by Sylla. Ambitious of command, he had recently arrived in Spain, not to succour Sertorius, but to supersede him. His army did indeed consist principally of Italians collected from various regions, brave and skilful soldiers in the field, but disjointed and undisciplined partisans every where else; ill-restrained by a general, and his lieutenants not less capricious than themselves. In Rome, ten years before, he would have appeared, as compared with Sertorius, by much the most important: in his gown, and followed by his clients, he could have had but few competitors. Nor did it occur to him that a hundred battles fought since then by Sertorius would much vary the difference between them. His noble birth and Roman army entitled him to the usual superiority over a fortunate leader of barbarians. Hardly

had he crossed the Pyrenees, before these pleasing visions were interrupted by Metellus and Afranius ; his army was overthrown, driven back among the mountains, besieged in its camp, and it would have been annihilated but for the intervention of Sertorius, who fell as heavily and unexpectedly upon them as they had fallen upon Perpenna.

Among so much geographical confusion, while war was carried on with an intricacy of which no explanation has been attempted, all round Spain at the same time, and in almost every province, we must be content to know that Metellus and Pompeius occupied principally the south-eastern half, and Sertorius the north-western. Yet were their camps separated by less than forty Roman miles. It was among the more mountainous districts bordering on Gaul and the ocean that Sertorius had collected his chief strength ; in the territories and around the capital of Orcilis, a prince whose ancient kingdom, comprehending both Osca and Alba, was bounded by the river Iberus and Gallia Aquitanensis.

CHAPTER III.

ARGUMENT.

The Pyrenees. — Their higher Solitudes. — A Valley bordered by Forests on one Side, and Cliffs apparently inaccessible on the other. — Superstitious Belief of the few Shepherds and Travellers who pass under them. — Their Recesses unlike these imaginary Representations. — The Fountain there. — The Idol. — The Worshipper. — The Victim. — The Deity. — The Supplication, — and the Messenger of the Sibyl.

THERE was space enough in the western Pyrenees for several independent principalities, till Rome overshadowed them, first as allies, and then as subjects. The largest of these diminutive kingdoms, nominally free, but protected by Sertorius, had absorbed the rest. As they were the weakest which most needed assistance from their confederates, a defensive unity of this kind was no usurpation. Alba and Concana, once metropolitan cities of their respective nations, had since become subordinate to Osca, and no more than provincial capitals under the same sovereignty.

The mountains between them rose higher by endless gradations as they receded from the south. Their long ranges looked down upon a country

populous, notwithstanding the devastations of war; fertile and opulent wherever the husbandman could be protected. Those apparently interminable plains which extended from their feet, had cities carefully garrisoned, citadels impregnable against surprises or assaults, towns strongly walled, castles and villages surrounded by intrenchments, at least, wherever the inequalities of the ground were adapted to their defence. Even the lower mountains too were fortified by such obstructions as rendered them difficult of access. Every rock or ravine, if it were sufficiently precipitous, afforded a temporary place of refuge to its own neighbourhood.

But beyond and above these, were solitudes into the sanctity of which war could obtrude its cruel presence only as a stranger. They were a residence for the neatherd or the goatherd when he removed his charge to safer shelter or fresher pastures. Wildernesses intervened too barren even for him, which frowned away the spring, disdainful of its verdure. Here were forests of the ilex and the pine, recesses among rocks and glens seldom explored even by their few stationary inhabitants, wide moors, sterile plains, crags visited only by the kite or the eagle. And sometimes too, softer vallies lay

between, where grew a greener turf in cooler regions, districts refreshed and enlivened by their streams, ornamented and diversified rather than encumbered by their trees. Nature here appeared at ease, unconscious of boundaries and irresponsible to a proprietor. The few highways by which these solitudes were intersected, disappeared with the traveller. She suffered no lasting traces of man's sovereignty as a brand-mark by which her future tribute and subjection might be reclaimed. It was only during the transit of some vagrant merchant with his slaves and mules, or some cohort glittering in arms, and returning from conquest with its captives, that they might be distinguished as thoroughfares. Two or three public roads, between the metropolitan cities, were indicated by the hoofs of horses, but no where could be discerned the trace of wheels.

Such was one of those long and level vallies, tufted on the lower part only with fern and broom, or dwarf bushes no higher than these, but which rested morning and evening under the shadow of forests ancient as its mountains on the western side, and of rocks apparently inaccessible on the eastern. A shallow river, dividing the greensward unequally, and lying like an uncoiled cable in easy curves, kept or

again turned its sparkling current closest to the cliffs.

Abrupt and precipitous as they seemed, yet might those cliffs have been ascended if no greater obstacle had interposed than the prohibition of nature. For inequalities were hidden from beneath, ledges and recesses which would have facilitated the enterprise, dwarf pines twisting their roots among the crevices, ancient junipers with their naked stems, and stunted oaks with their mossy branches.

Far surer protectors to the solitudes above were terror and mystery. Every shepherd in a population so scanty, shunned the summit as dangerous through excess of holiness. The sanctity of the place operated as a curse. Rarely, excepting by compulsion, did any travel through the valley beneath; but it was from some districts the shortest and easiest way; from Idu-beda to Osca the only one. Men averted their faces if they passed under these rocks alone; if accompanied by others, they walked faster, breathed thicker, and spoke lower. The stray kid which browsed among their ledges and crevices, was neither found nor followed. Lights at midnight had been visible from a distance illuminating the skies behind: some shepherds

believed them to be the escaped and suffused materials with which an earthquake otherwise would have exploded; still more called them sacrificial fires, and supposed that they had been kindled by the lesser gods in worship of the greater. Here the superstitions of ignorance were never quenched by the smile of mutual disdain, nor dissipated by contradictory conjectures. What the wiser has heard he believes, because he has heard it; what the simpler has received as true, and esteemed as probable, he first confounds and then communicates.

And yet the traditions of ages differed in little beside the names. At one time, it was Berecynthia that inhabited these heights, or as she is also called, Rhæa, Cybele, and Fauna. Then it was the infernal Diana in her more terrible character of Hecate Tergemina, the goddess of silence, the protectress of wisdom and chastity, whose oracles could be heard only by the innocent. A Syrian or Phœnician deity may have reigned there earlier than these. According to some traditions, in these recesses was the ever open path of hell; and here it was that Triforma Proserpina had thrown wide its portals to ascend between them. Others recognised, amidst her hundred names, the majesty of Fate, the primor-

dial Destiny, the just interpreter of the gods; unless she be higher still, their controller and directress; who foresees, but never helps—forewarns, but never saves—who hears men, and pities them, and answers them, but still points immutably to her decrees—from whose lips the Sibyls draw their oracles, and Jove his threats.

Confused as may be such superstitions, they are less contradictory than they appear. Beside a community of names, various attributes were ascribed to the same deity, and many deities were adorned with the same attribute. But thus far it was agreed, that she whose divinity is worshipped here can be approached only by the innocent—that she requires pious lips, pure hands, and chaste bosoms.

Greatly different would have been found the scene of such reverential dread from its imaginary representation. Here were no horrors beside those of fancy. Nature seemed to have adorned its seclusion for the visits of a benignant deity, and the reception of a grateful worshipper. The apparent summit was not the real one. Other rocks farther back encircled a small verdant area of mossy turf, scarcely less tender and variable in its hues than the flowers which were scattered over it. In some

parts it was open to the air : at morning and evening it might be penetrated by the sunbeam : elsewhere the trunks and branches of trees so large overshadowed it, that they appeared coeval with the rocks around them, and far older than the skies above. Fragments of stone had fallen in former ages from these pinnacles, each block as high and broad as a shepherd's cottage. Time harmonised and ornamented such incumbrances, till they seemed the deposit of nature rather than of accident. They furnished space for the growth of mosses more brightly coloured still : they were tufted by flowers more rare, or tendrils climbing from plants more delicate. The ilex cast its branches on the turf : other evergreen thickets skreened some portions of the little labyrinth, and decorated them all.

Small as it appeared, there was room for mystery. No lamb pastured upon its greensward ; no bird built among its branches. The Muses might have selected a retirement so silent for inspiration aided by memory ; or the Nymphs, tired of the chase, for their repose.

Nor would they have wanted the accustomed fountain, perennial, inexhaustible, unsullied — issuing from a source so near the ground that it fell languidly and soothingly, with motion scarcely

sufficient to whiten the shallow basin which its waters had scooped out.

Solemn at all times, even while early dew sparkled upon the herbage — terror could be suggested by such a place only when night heightened and distorted the rocks, obscuring, perplexing, confounding the little which she revealed. Its stillness now appears like the suspended respiration of Nature; we wait till she shall breath again; and yet that next breath may reveal a secret which we dread to hear!

In such a night, while every leaf rests upon its spray as if listening to the fountain, another sound mingles with the water's murmur. There are deep sighs, there is a voice which weeps! In the centre of that rocky theatre, lights are kindled: behold the preparations for sacrifice! Some mourner prays! A square hewn stone, breast-high, stands upon three broad steps: it is methodically piled with broken boughs, and illuminated by two sacrificial torches. Fabricated from the pine, and steeped in resin, their radiance reaches to the rocks, flashes among the trees, explodes its sparks into the water, and discovers on that ancient altar, against which they lean, the interrupted and half obliterated traces of three female heads, with no more than one neck.

Beneath the base, and from the lowest of these three steps, issues the streamlet ; and at scarcely three paces more in front, lies the rocky basin, its first resting-place. Opposite to them both, in the full effulgence of those lights, kneels the worshipper, and upon the turf between, behold the victim !

If only pious lips and chaste bosoms venture here, this oblation may be the offering of gratitude ; it cannot be the expiation of guilt. If she who weeps be the priestess of this three-faced idol, her thoughts are less occupied by the greatness of the deity, than the sufferings of the sacrifice. Here are grief and dread — reluctant duty, remorseful service ! Death, premeditated death, should be inflicted by the pitiless. To youth so gentle as this, better might have been assigned the offices and offerings of love — songs, not sighs — flowers and fruits, not blood.

Fair and innocent as is the face of this young worshipper, no blush ever yet suffused its cheek, nor smile sparkled upon its lip. Now, it is rendered still more pale by grief which loves and pities. Yet, notwithstanding its dejection, some among the proudest of mankind have watched it trembling. By the breath from those lips, hope has been dispersed : the sounds uttered by them never

were recalled! It is the Prophetess of Destiny who weeps — the Sibyl of Spain! Her long hair braided upon the forehead is interwoven with pearls. The robes which descend about her feet, but have not concealed them, are coloured like the violet. The zone of purple, darker still, sparkles with gems.

Midway between the fountain and herself lies a small white fawn, its legs fettered and concealed under it, the head erect, and turned steadfastly toward that mourner's face. The patient creature appears familiar, yet ill at ease. Even the bosom where it fain would hide itself, is scarce so fair. There is the gaze of wonder in those large fixed eyes. They watch for some change, they ask for some recompense. Why are the accustomed caresses now withheld? Why are its feet shackled and placed beyond their reach? Those dreadful torches, why should they blaze so near? In vain does the gentle victim strive to rise, struggling with its fetters; or extend the slender neck, now to entreat protection, now to invite play. That hand has another office which it must discharge soon: and it is withheld because it must. Better appear cruel than be thus treacherous, or fondle at one moment what it will slay the next. Alas, again does it become irresolute:

for the last time it will present some flower which the light betrays, and the victim strives to reach.

Less afflicting than such gentleness would have been the looks of terror or even of reproach. As in those older sacrifices which blinded the Syrian mother with their fires, and stunned or maddened her with their cymbals, worse than the infant's shrieks, harder to bear than its calls and struggles, were some mirthful smile of love, or some offer of its little arms in play. Here are no sounds, no cries, nor horns, nor cymbals, nor blaspheming priests, nor drunken worshippers. The heart of Nature beats inaudibly; the stream has ceased; the moon's last rays have faded from off the waters; the sacrificial torches flutter awhile, then die! Alas, the irresolute! too late! She bends her face above her knees—she covers it with her mantle—she perceives the nearness of those feet which come so straight, and tread so steadily, which make no noise as they approach, and leave no traces when they have passed away: before which the hushed elements suspend their murmur, though lamentations follow them louder than their fury. Too late! alas, the irresolute! The mistress whom she seeks, whose advent should have been propitiated by the sacrifice, rises

above her altars! The radiance of that countenance which, even in its eclipse, confounds the deities, shines full upon her!

FATE.

Why dost thou seek me here, child?

SIBYL.

The oracle is silent, and there are no visions. Teach me what to speak.

FATE.

Who asks of thee?

SIBYL.

Sertorius has thrice stood before the Temple, yet was there no voice. He returns this third time with victory which I might not promise.

FATE.

What wouldst thou promise?

SIBYL.

Life till Peace.

FATE.

Grief follows Strife, Death Grief.

SIBYL.

Woe is me! Woe that the breath of Destiny should pass from my lips! That mine should be the voice of Grief and Death!

FATE.

For what else do men wait and listen? They were Earth's earliest cries. Their echo still rings among her nations. The first utterance was not mine. It was taught to me.

SIBYL.

Men dread both — I covet one of them. Remove from me these terrors, or teach me what to speak! My heart burns! O, thou that dost afflict me thus, have pity on me! Bid me escape and hide myself — release me — let me die!

FATE.

The offering which lies before thee is accepted of thee. Throw down the knife.

SIBYL.

Hitherto have I offered only that which I loved the best — the best ever.

FATE.

And what is this?

SIBYL.

The best and last. It is the last thing which I have loved, or which loves me. The Priestess trembles at me — my sisters flee from me — the utterance of mine own lips affrights me — all human creatures shun me! This beast does not. What answer may I carry?

FATE.

The same — Sorrow and Death. Thou shalt answer, but not aid — forewarn, but not save.

SIBYL.

Alas! be gracious to me! Thou canst do all things, mighty one! Not so! Woe to the just! Death to the beneficent! Mother, be merciful!

FATE.

Look eastward, child! look for the light! It awes me, rules me, makes my name unholy, and blasts my sovereignty. Mercy comes thence! What dost thou seek beside for him?

SIBYL.

Not peace, but hope of it — not life, but victory.

FATE.

Then send them to him. These first from thee

— go, speed their messenger. These from thyself. From me, Sorrow and Death.

SIBYL.

How shall I send? What messenger?

FATE.

Behold!

SIBYL.

The Fawn?

FATE.

Unbind her feet.

Diana's Fawn — the Sibyl's Gift — Fate's Messenger — The face first seen by thee shall be a god to thee. Love thou and serve. While life endures, thou shalt remain unchanged. Fairer thou canst not be — be faithful still — love, serve, and warn, then die — but all in vain.

Weary with its terrors, the patient creature seemed regardless or unconscious of its release. And now, behold, its eyes are shaded by the intervention of that hand which conquers all things, from the effulgence of that countenance which awes the gods! Its head sinks upon the turf — it sleeps!

As those last words cease, the light fades —

the waters gush forth again. So utter becomes the darkness, that neither the stars above, nor the branches which interpose, nor the altar close in front — nor even the foam upon the fountain's basin, can be discerned. There are no sounds beside the falling stream ; and upon the unseen grass, only one small spot is still visible, like a single drift of snow.

CHAPTER IV.

ARGUMENT.

Spanus and Porsa, a Pastoral. — The Shepherd pursued, overtaken, and detained. — His desertion ascribed to Love. — Love which exasperates Misfortune. — Pride or Ignorance may have caused his Calamities; not Irreverence nor Unthankfulness. — Porsa confesses her many provocations against the Gods, and inculcates Humility. — Mournful Consequences of her Skill in Computation. — The Flight of Riches. — Spanus has undertaken a long Journey in vain. — The just Man Setubal. — Provident, considerate, argumentative. — The Dream. — The theological Discussion which it suggests. — Spanus extricates himself from his Wife by proposing that they shall not separate.

HARDLY any region is so desolate as to retain its gloom against the influences of vernal breezes and early sunshine. Rocks, moors, sands, wildernesses, barren as they may be, are then only the less ornamented of Nature's children, not her scorn and shame. The wilds which encompassed this habitation of phantoms and visions, were neither sterile nor melancholy:— among the earth's varieties they held an honorable place, as her roomy reservations from the encroachments of man. The long and level valley which lay be-

tween these cliffs consecrated to terror on one hand, and the mountain ranges covered with forests, on the other, if its soil were too scanty for stronger vegetation, still was its shallow turf verdant, its sparkling streamlet clear and rapid. And now the loftiest crag brightens in the sunbeams; peaks of granite glow like topaz pinnacles upon the mountain tops;—with wings outspread but motionless, the eagle floats around them higher still;—the dreams and apparitions of the night have passed away.

Days, and sometimes weeks elapsed without any interruption to such silence by man's presence or pursuits,—the shepherd's pipe, or hunter's horn. Travellers usually suspended their adventure till they could gain courage from society, and pass in companies. But now, emerging almost opposite to those cliffs so strongly fortified by superstition, behold a peasant still young, whose contracted brow and compressed lip denote that he is collecting enough of resolution for some perilous exploit. Descending to the daylight from his forest glades, there is a momentary relaxation of such forced alacrity; his gait becomes irresolute; it slackens, falters, and soon stops. With one hand shading his eyes from the sunbeams which, by this time, have fallen low enough to

dazzle them, he gazes upward on Diana's sanctuary, Berecynthia's height, the shrine of Proserpine, or however else it may be described.

His raiment was of a kind best calculated for temperate climates and pastoral occupations. The colour and materials of his single garment in use — only that its hue was more grave, and its texture less delicately woven, were such as soldiers prefer for their tents, seamen for their sails, and millers for their mealsacks. Extending from his neck to his knees, but concealing neither, it was girded about his loins with a wolf-skin belt. If the left arm had not been encumbered by his cloak, no lover of simplicity in apparel could have desired less. Nor was the hesitation in his progress long protracted. After having looked back once or twice into the path by which he came, he resumed his purpose with longer strides, crossed the greensward between the forest and the cliffs, and then depositing his cloak and hempen tunic on the rivulet's margin, he repeated his ablutions three times with ceremonies carefully protracted and scrupulously minute. From his hollow palm he poured libations to the sun, the air, the ocean, the three divisions of the earth, and the cliffs above his head. That no possible error might exist in the computation, three

times did he perfect his offerings and ascend the bank.

Hardly were these solemn rites well dispatched, and his garment replaced, when other and longer interruptions suspended the enterprise. The whole valley resounded with lamentations, and Echo from her crags and caves reclaimed the fugitive. By love, by pity, by the greater Gods, and the less, — he was adjured to stop. Men seldom listen so flexibly to the entreaties, or the upbraidings of those who follow them, as when their undertakings are perilous. Spanus had not permitted his religious obligations to suffer through excess of eagerness. The supplications of love are powerfully seconded by a consciousness that wisdom is circumspect, and that we are rash. Unlike many other people, he felt more in dread of Proserpine or Destiny, than of his wife. Deaf or obdurate, at any time, must he have been who could resist adjurations so pitiful as these. The bewildered peasant's ears were opened and quickened by their proximity to the cliffs, and he had a tender heart.

Small space, indeed, would have been allowed him for the remonstrances of cruelty. Whatever doubt may have appeared in his own advances toward this habitation of terror, there was none in

his pursuer's. The valley had been crossed, and the brook forded, before he could find time for stubbornness. Sexual dignity required that he should be subdued, if subdued at all, by blandishments and entreaties adequate to his concessions. He stood awhile like the column of a temple which may be embraced, but not shaken. Nor was it till the unhappy Porsa had so far recovered her breath, after its profuse expenditure in haste, terror, and supplication, as to remind him, amidst sobs and tears, of his children and his household gods, — of Juno, at whose altars he had sworn, — of Jugatinus and Domiducus, — of Pan and Pales, — the Dryades and Orestiades, — that he prepared to yield. But when she released his neck, slipping from the bosom that she might embrace his knees, the compassionate Spanus raised her with a sigh, silently seating her on the rivulet's margin, and himself beside her.

Prayers, however fervent, are partly modulated by custom. Grief, however simple or tender, must express itself as Nature has been educated by example. The pious Porsa felt that no extremity of terror or sorrow should dispense with a long enumeration particularising sacred names and ancient ceremonies. Nay, as a slip now might have consequences more disastrous than ever before,

she thought that the greatness of the occasion would require proportionable care, and especial solemnity.

PORSA.

Helpless and forsaken, of all mothers the most miserable, — woe is me ! What is it that I have done ? Rebuke and punish me if thou hast been displeased — but do not leave me, Spanus ! Be-
think thee of those doves placed by us on the altar of Venus, before our spousals ; on the spear's head which parted, and the coronet of roses which circled my tresses after them ; the three boys and the five torches which conducted me from my mother's door ! What avails it that the deities sent to us, each by the bird or beast which he loves the best, some token of his favour, then ? That the mountains welcomed me with their pleasant voices ; the streams laughed, and the trees were glad — if I must become at last thus desolate, of all women the most unhappy ! Even yet will I believe that thou didst love me once.

SPANUS.

I loved thee, Porsa, not as I then told thee, but far more than I was able to tell, when one garland was hung by me, in the morning, on thy mother's door, and another on mine own, at eve.

When I lifted thee high above the threshold lest thy feet should touch it; and though no children were yet there to gather them, when I scattered nuts about the floor, I loved thee, innocent as Diana's youngest nymph, and fairer than Hebe at the footstool of Jupiter. Time, which corrupts and consumes the feeble, may perfect the strong. Neither then, nor ever since then, did I love thee with such might and honor as now I do.

PORSA.

Is it because love grows greater and more honorable that thou wouldst flee from me thus?

SPANUS.

It is from thy misery that I would flee; thy patience, thy silence, and the sight of those tears.

PORSA.

I have never shed tears till now, when I supposed that they might be seen by thee. They shall scare thee from me no more.

SPANUS.

Grief has added this evil to the rest, it constrains us to hide distressful thoughts. There is now no longer the former companionship, even in our tears.

PORSA.

While we dwelt so joyfully among such abundance, we should have prepared to endure its loss without shedding any.

SPANUS.

If alone, I might have better spared the wealth which fell to me by inheritance, and was increased by labour. Nor have I yet reproached the gods that it is gone.

PORSA.

Because our complaints have been withheld from each other's ears, the louder and more frequent are our sighs in theirs. We suffer, but not patiently. Alas! Spanus, let us remember what we once had, only that we may be thankful for having once had it.

SPANUS.

Will this remembrance feed our babes, or will the gods fill their mouths, when we cannot? By remembering that I have been scarce less happy than the deities themselves, can I forget that their eyes now pursue me to the dust?

PORSA.

If we lie there without the fresh provocation of complaint, they will turn away from us. The

silent, though they awaken neither pity nor repentance, may be overlooked.

SPANUS.

Holy as they are, was it with anger that they witnessed our prosperity?

PORSA.

They may have watched our pride with displeasure.

SPANUS.

If I have wanted humility before them, it was in ignorance. And thou, Porsa, what hast thou done amiss?

PORSA.

Much negligently, which they may have judged to have been done presumptuously or irreverently. I winnowed our barley with a west wind! Let this last evil, the concealment of sorrowful thoughts, be our hindrance no more. Never have I hidden the errors or the transgressions which afflicted mine, through any other fear than that they might be a grief to thee. But now, under these rocks, and knowing who will hear us, let both repent! I will confess what is known to her, and should have been concealed from neither. If the ewes ate aconite in the shade, and our five

swine strayed so far that neither foot nor eye could follow them, it was because I had winnowed parched barley with a west wind, and essayed to cut the last year's osiers with a reaping-hook. It is rather in the speed, than the severity of their chastisements, that we discover our offences. Before the next new moon, the swine were gone! The barley which had fallen light as chaff upon the threshing-floor, turned to dust! The osiers would not bend.

SPANUS.

Evil has been done by both of us; but it was not wilfully done. And shall I forfeit the hatchet, for having broken the heft? Must I lose my hide to the flayer, because I have missed my way in the dark? Are the heedless and the impious both alike?

PORSA.

Heedlessness is impiety. It appears only when awe is absent. Twice have I sprinkled, in their meal, unbleached salt before the Lares!

SPANUS.

If I covered the ass's crates with an uncombed fleece, is it not enough that the crates are broken, and that the ass is dead?

PORSÆ.

By numbering our possessions, we both claimed them from the deities, not at their bounty which might be resumed, but as our own inheritance. Nor did I bethink me to recede nine paces backwards after I had transgressed.

SPANUS.

Every goatherd counts his kids : lest, peradventure, the foxes should have stolen them, so did I. But never till some were missed.

PORSÆ.

Not because they had yet grown fewer ; it was in haughtiness of heart because their increase seemed so great, that we numbered our fowl ; thou, as they walked on high along the house ridge ; I, as they fluttered down to sun themselves about its steps. Therefore has one eagle carried the pullets to her aerie, another has slain the cocks.

SPANUS.

From which quarter came this ill neighbourhood ? The eagles are Jupiter's birds, the cocks were mine. I never envied him.

PORSÆ.

But why should errors of our own be imputed to the gods as severities ?

SPANUS.

Did these evils come unsent? If the winds blow east or west, as their tasks are set them, do hogs and eagles stray by chance? I counted the pullets no more than once, and then amiss. He took all, even to an egg, and such beside as I could not count.

PORSA.

The bees are still spared to us, because it was impossible that we should have numbered them. They labour the more earnestly, as if they knew that we are forsaken of the rest. Let us endure with patience, till the deities shall have pitied us. Our goats strayed through my carelessness. I saw them wandering toward these cliffs; even as far as to this stream, I followed them. They crossed it, but I feared.

SPANUS.

Thou didst cross it, even now, Porsa — without fear.

PORSA.

Because, in my haste, I forgot that I was afraid. Alas, that I should have brought so much of misery, where there was only peace before! Let us be thankful for what the Gods have left us; and not forget what they might, in their displeasure, have refused to leave.

SPANUS.

Beside the bees, what have they left?

PORSA.

We have three babes still — nor did Saturn, when he first looked upon his three sons, behold one more fair. The acorns and the chesnuts remain, though the swine which should have batted from them do not. And we have yet one small cheese from the last ewe's milk.

SPANUS.

This will be eaten by neither, because it is a morsel too small for both.

PORSA.

Our children thrive upon their meat. They are as rosy as Cupid, and as full of mirth.

SPANUS.

They thrive the best; for, scanty as it is, they have the best and most.

PORSA.

If I repine because there is no more, or no better, run from me to these rocks a second time.

SPANUS.

Every day do I see thee eating by necessity,
what the swine ate only when they pleased.

PORSIA.

A little while, and I may dismiss the infant
from my bosom. By then the osiers will be green.
I can peel of them thirteen burdens in one day,
and plat three baskets in the next.

SPANUS.

Already are there three-score baskets seasoning
beneath the shed; but where is he that should
have carried them for us to the merchant?

PORSIA.

Thy father's beast? It is wisdom to forget the
lost!

SPANUS.

They both are lost! Shall I forget them both?
It was no easy matter to think of either by him-
self; for till death separated them, seldom were
they seen apart. This comfort still stays with me
—I have ever revered both of them alike.
He went first, that could be the best spared. For
old as the ass may have appeared, and was re-
ported, before these troubles were come upon us,

he could carry home the fuel which I had hewn,
and abroad the baskets which thou hadst woven.

PORSA.

There have been thousands that perished beside,
and before, him.

SPANUS.

Some by ill chance, many by hard fare, more
still by cruel usage — the overdriven, the heavy-
burdened, the half-fed; but was any one, till
now, too old to live?

PORSA.

Nor was he.

SPANUS.

If not, it must have been the wrath of Jupiter
against myself, which smote him. For how had
he offended?

PORSA.

He may have died through weakness, loss of
appetite, or want of breath. His eyes had become
so dim that he knew not how to find his meat
abroad; and when we had gathered it for him at
home, his teeth were grown so long that he could
not eat it.

SPANUS.

He was the last pledge which might have been

accepted of me by Setubal — if not for his own deserts, yet for my father's sake! Porsa, this alone have I ever hidden from thee. It must be told at last. We can no longer abide here! To-night, the rocks must be our shelter — and if we eat, the trees must feed us. Colder winds now blow among the mountains. The babes are tender, their raiment scanty, our victuals spent. Setubal will forbear no longer — even for a day. He is on his road from Ebilenum; we must go forth by noon.

PORSA.

Who said this?

SPANUS.

He — that it should be so. I saw him yesterday.

PORSA.

Where?

SPANUS.

In his own porch. I have been to Ebilenum.

PORSA.

So far in one day?

SPANUS.

The distance seemed still farther even than it was — for I travelled heavily burdened both

ways. Thither, were carried shame and dread — back again, sorrow and hopelessness. I reminded him of my father. I said that many generations had dwelt here — beseeching his patience till the return of spring. He answered, that he had ever loved my father: that my father paid him to a day: that his patience had lasted longer than my modesty: that I had required it, and abused it, more springs than one: and that now it was my turn to become patient. I spoke of our three children. He said that, married as he was to a young wife, peradventure he might have six: that if fewer, he must look betimes, and with better heed than I had done: that I was a spendthrift, so idle as to merit no pity for my babes, or else that the Gods had despised me and forsaken me.

PORSA.

If they forsake us, it is not because we have been idle or wasteful. Setubal is unjust.

SPANUS.

He says no. It is his glory that as he deceives no man — neither by any may he be deceived. With many words did he follow me from his gate: graciously spoken were they, yet like the judgment of death to hear. Our habitation is his.

Ten times did he set forth his equity, and require me to answer him, if I could. Has he been cruel to any beside himself? Has he not forborne so long patiently and pitifully for my father's sake, and that he might be repaid at last? Should he again forbear, what promise would I make him? Lifting them high above his head, he smote his hands together—he bade me speak and answer him. “Am I not just? What evil have I done thee? Is the ground thine? Have I been hard or hasty? Must I forego mine own? When did I take usuriously? Can this be said of Setubal? Imposing bonds, inflicting stripes, reviling and obtesting, have I dealt proudly with thee? Why, now I love thee, Spanus—the choice is still before thee—do as thy father hoped to do—buy homestead, barley-plot, and osier-bed—the whole estate, mead, croft, and byre. The price remains unchanged, one silver talent and a half—then mayest thou bide till death, thou and thy babes. Or pay the three year's rent to me—but no more rob me, Spanus! Is this unjust? Behold I quit the debt—it is remitted to thee—so get thee gone—and pray that Mercury may teach thee greater thrift.”

PORSA.

Thus far the choice is not hard; there is no

perplexity in it; we see at once which we must prefer. The beast could do no more than keep his eyes half open till thou hadst returned, or Setubal might have accepted him for thy father's sake.

SPANUS.

He will be here by noon.

PORSA.

Nothing remains alive beside the children and the bees! There is enough of sorrow: let us not offend the deities still farther by our despair, lest they, too, should abandon us.

SPANUS.

They were the first that left us, Porsa.

PORSA.

Then what else dost thou seek for here? Thou couldst quit me in my sleep: there was neither word nor kiss. I awoke: the garment which hitherto had been reserved for days of sacrifice was gone. I traced thy footsteps in the dew, and saw thee here! Are the sovereign deities less terrible to thee than Setubal?

SPANUS.

They may be less ungracious. Even in their

displeasure, they have scattered husks and acorns in my path, and hung some berries for me on the bushes; he dismissed me hungry without one morsel of his bread. His abode could be entered by me no farther than the porch; theirs, though terrible in its holiness, may not be shut.

PORSA.

Wouldst thou draw near to them without a gift?

SPANUS.

They have left me nothing which I may present. I never wronged the Gods.

PORSA.

To go before them empty-handed, is not this to wrong them? Even among themselves, or, as some declare, above themselves, is this presence the most dreadful.

SPANUS.

In my dreams last night it appeared otherwise to me. I had walked so far, that, tired as I was, sleep gave me no rest. The knees ached, the heart jarred against its ribs. I seemed to wander through the woods; down in the valley here; then homeward back again. Faint shouts arose among the mountains, the cry of dogs, the

blast of horns, shrill voices nearer by degrees, and echoes louder than themselves. A stricken hart rushed past me; a huntress followed him. Her face I saw not; that shoulder which the quiver crossed was naked; the sandals on her feet seemed winged; the dogs could scarce keep pace with them. She neither stopped nor turned, but spake, "Come this way, Spanus." Hart, hounds, and huntress disappeared. I ran downhill the road she went, and, lo, again I saw her! She crossed the waters where we sit. Leaping from rock to rock, she scaled the highest of all, then stopped and beckoned toward me. Above her head a moon, some five days old, shone clearer than the daylight. My joy awoke me. The babe was in thy bosom; a tear half dried upon thy cheek!

PORSA.

Even now he misses me, and needs me. Let us return.

SPANUS.

The other two will ask for meat again. I dread their eyes and tongues even worse than Setubal's. When I can bring them what they crave, I will return; but not till then.

PORSA.

They are without help, as well as nourishment.

SPANUS.

I can give neither, Porsa.

PORSA.

This Setubal will find them.

SPANUS.

He or the foxes must. Better he should do so: take them for rent, then feed and sell them; so this way have his due from me.

PORSA.

O, cruel! what, our babes?

SPANUS.

Ay, them and thee.

PORSA.

Whither wouldst go thyself? up to the huntress there? Follow a dream? What canst thou take?

SPANUS.

Enough of misery.

PORSA.

We would be rid of misery. That which we love the best; that which is precious to us, is

what she asks. Nor will she receive even these from other than pure hands, pious lips, and chaste bosoms.

SPANUS.

That which is precious to me — that which I love the best — pure hands, pious lips, a bosom not less innocent than her own, shall be my offering, Porsa! Do thou go with me thither.

Spanus may have meant nothing more by his invitation than that the divinity would honour, as he himself did, the chastity and sanctity of his wife. Or else he may have felt some unrecognised wish, which his manhood disclaimed, for a companion in his perils.

But Porsa, whose imagination had been awakened by the double bereavement of her children, understood the suggestion quite otherwise. It seemed not less alarming than affectionate. Beside that she shuddered at the thought of this just man Setubal as a nurse in her place; it was a startling proposition to face Destiny, or Hecate, or Proserpine, — or peradventure all three at once. She would have followed her husband across the Styx, if he and his children might have been benefited by the enterprise. But now either Setubal would resign her babes to the foxes, or

the foxes to Setubal. The commendations and caresses of Spanus affrighted her. What was it that he designed? Did he mean to take her for his sacrifice? Had he been maddened by misery? Like a victim disengaged from the altar, she fled back even more wildly and fearfully than she had approached. His calls redoubled her speed. It was from the terrors of Destiny that she ran to the rescue of her children.

Spanus meanwhile bethought himself of his vow that he would return to them no more till he could protect them and sustain them. Setubal was not the kind of guardian which he would have preferred; nor, indeed, might Setubal accept the charge. The unhappy peasant had regained his liberty with some little embarrassment as to the use of it; but love, pity, shame, and want, were his instructors. After having raised the cloak, to clear his own and Porsa's tears from his countenance, he fastened it about his neck that he might climb with hands and feet unencumbered, and present himself before the goddess in his sacrificial robe. When the affrighted Porsa ventured to look back, he was midway, and out of sight.

CHAPTER V.

ARGUMENT.

Spanus uneasy because he can find nothing to alarm him. — The Fountain. — The Altar. — The Fawn. — Setubal's young Wife Matula. — Her Studies and Partialities. — Spanus first ventures and then deliberates. — Appeals for instruction to the Idol. — Departs satisfied with its acquiescence. — Is intercepted by a great Army. — There is one Moral Question on which alone he and Porsa have ever disagreed. — Spanus adheres to his Opinion. — Presents his Fawn and himself.

TRADITION had represented this rocky solitude as terrible even to the innocent. It was the abode of some great deity whose wrath would pursue and consume every other worshipper. On reconsideration, the disconsolate peasant began to repent his vow, and tremble at its temerity. Might he so far trust a dream? could the misery which he endured recommend him as a suppliant? was it not rather the chastisement of presumption, of ingratitude, of ignorance, of some trespass unconsciously committed, or some duty negligently discharged? If so, his presence there might seem like the insolence of pride, and still farther aggravate punishment, this second time provoked by its

obduracy. Why suppose that grief can incline the Gods? May it not be significant of their displeasure? Who else had inflicted it, and hitherto had refused to remove it? What care they for sighs extorted by their own severity? Innocence! It were wiser to renounce its privileges on his own behalf, unless some joint claim might be preferred with Porsa and her children. No murmurs had escaped from them, no irreverent impatience, as if in the same degree as they were guiltless and harmless, the deities were cruel. Their images softened his heart, but animated his courage. For their sakes he would confront the goddess.

He ascends the cliffs. He stands, at last, upon the crag from which that visionary huntress had beckoned him in his sleep. Prepared for horrors, he is now disconcerted by their absence; by silence so profound, tranquillity so unlike his apprehensions. The peaceful beauty of the place, its seclusion and quietude; its dewy verdure and airy freshness are perplexing to him. From childhood he had been acquainted with a hundred scenes more wild, and in appearance not less mysterious. Could this be the residence of her, by whose truth and sanctity the Gods confirm their oaths — on whose altar lie heaped for ever,

new griefs, ruined hopes, vain endeavours, abortive schemes? Is it here that she is worshipped by terror, for whom there can be no escape — by wisdom uselessly provident — by remorse and misery and despair, all equal in their impotence? Where is that double fountain of tears and blood? Can these voiceless breezes be indeed the sighs from breaking hearts?

The rocks before him and around him permitted no farther progress, or he would have continued to advance, still seeking beyond them for Pluto's gate. A native of the forest, he had seen no trees so large, no grass so verdant, no flowers so rare. Wandering on the mossy turf without choice as to his direction, nothing else alarmed him except such unvaried stillness; nor did that much. But in the same proportion as he regained his courage, he lost his hopes. There was no huntress, and no trace of either Hecate Tergemina or Proserpina Triforma. It soon appeared a misfortune, or at least a discouragement, that he could encounter so little of which to feel afraid. Rather disappointed than relieved, he rested upon the turf. Should he go farther? there was no path. Should he go back? he had no home. Another tenant occupied the habitation of his ancestors and his infancy. What respite now remained for

his children — what refuge for his Penates? In vain did he venture to encounter the divine displeasure; he could purchase neither bread nor shelter, even by the sacrifice of himself.

Religious in his punctuality was that just man Setubal. No creditor was ever more scrupulously retentive of his promises. He would rise before the day, he would travel in darkness like the pestilence, to assert his dues and justify his equity. Spanus remembered the eloquence to which he had made no reply; the accusation still rang in his ears, that he was abandoned by the gods; and the challenge, that he might answer if he could.

Such perplexing meditations were disentangled neither by patience nor change of scene. He rose, he advanced to the right and to the left, he selected another and another resting-place; but the beech-root was more uneasy than the stone, and the moss than either. At last there reached him the low murmur of water gushing and bubbling from its fountain. Anything like sound was preferable to stillness so intense. He approached that little basin into which the streamlet fell, and on the opposite margin he beheld three broad steps, and a square hewn stone breast-high. Incurious as the peasant had become, he must soon have observed, that this one stone was shaped by

labour, and that a three-faced image was still visible on its front. From such discoveries his eyes were preoccupied by that which lay between. The fawn still slept there, her little head reposing among flowers not more delicate: even in the shade its whiteness appeared so glossy as to diffuse a halo among the dew.

Spanus trode lightly and suppressed his breath. It was the first wonder which he had seen there. The fair creature! did it yet live? its flank heaved, and there was a tremulous movement of one ear. Wild animals were no novelties to the forester. He would rather have seen his lost goats accompanied by their kids, if he might have reclaimed them, than thrice the number of hinds and fawns, which hardly dogs or arrows could overtake. Nor was he much enlightened by the remembrance of his dream. Had the vision been vouchsafed and drawn him hither, to furnish only a plaything for his children, another claimant for the tenderness of Porsa? His children wanted bread: by this time they and Porsa might be shelterless! The deserted fawn reminded him of his babes, his babes of their mother, their mother of Setubal, and Setubal of that just man's wife.

For, wise as he was, the wealthy and equitable Setubal, well stricken in years, had lately married

a virgin younger than Porsa, with as much beauty and more animation. Many other things did this young wife love beside the eloquent Setubal, though her own words repeatedly testified to him not one so much. As yet she had no children, but she had two owls, the smallest of which was found with a silver ring about his neck inscribed to Minerva. She had a cat with pendent ears, a ram with four horns, and a he-goat with none at all. Instead of Porsa's three babes, she had three fox-cubs quite as tame, and illustrious among their kind for tails two cubits long. The glory of her collection was a squirrel black as ebony; and if this prodigy might be coupled with a fawn white as silver, Setubal at her intercession would forbear. Whether the compassionate huntress had pre-arranged for him all this, or had only conferred the opportunity, it was his wisdom which must secure the fruits.

As fishermen prepare their nets, receding a pace or two from the rivulet's bank before they advance to cast them on its waters, so did Spanus silently withdraw some few steps, then detach from his shoulders the cloak reserved for great occasions, and collecting its folds upon his left arm, stealthily, scientifically, yet fearfully approach. To counterbalance his trepidation, there was the dexterity

acquired by much practice ; for among his many accomplishments, Spanus was a fisherman. Though his heart beat, his hand extended and distributed the sacrificial garment, in a circle almost faultless around the fawn. The poor beast, affrighted from her sleep, sprang up only to feel her helplessness, and to roll blindfolded among its skirts. She had endured fetters before, but they were imposed by a hand trembling lest it should give pain, and with which she was familiar. Far different was the huge horny palm that now held her two fore-legs compressed as an additional security. Yet was Spanus skilled in such cares. Again and again had he carried homeward stray kids unhurt, and new-born lambs. Resting the terrified beast on his left arm, he secured to her air enough for breath, by raising the cloak without removing it. He knew that she would pant and tremble yet more if she might see where, and with whom, she was.

So little had his imagination been impressed by the place as sacred, that he might have left it immediately and irreverently, if his eye had not fallen on the three-faced image. The pious man stopped and shuddered. His triumph dispersed ! What was this fawn ? A victim prepared for sacrifice and deposited before the altar ? Was he guilty of

sacrilege unawares? Surely not! The little beast was free. There could be no oblation where there were neither cords to bind it, nor worshipper to present it, nor priest to slay it, nor fire to burn it. It requires time and argument, as well as self-denial, to convince ourselves that we should relinquish what we have secured with so much skill, and appropriated for purposes of so much urgency. A great many other interests, beside his own, were implicated in this deliberation. Porsa, his children, Setubal, and Matula, Setubal's wife, had already become partners in his fawn. True it was, that they could establish no just plea against the goddess, if the animal were hers indeed, whether as a donation or a natural subject. If she were pertinacious in reclaiming it, she might prove the proprietorship. Spanus resolved to yield his pretensions on the very first intimation that he must do so, and not before.

The peasant sees, or fancies, that the central head is crowned with a representation of towers and battlements; that the one looking towards his left hand is wreathed with snakes; and that, over the corresponding brow, rests the new moon. Are they the three *Parcæ*? If so, their hands cannot be described, because they never rest; and above that mystic loom, the tissue of which is bright and

golden like the sunbeam, then lurid and dismal as the thunder-cloud, their labour never ceases. Are they the three Furies, neither forgetting nor suspending retribution due to guilt, but silently augmenting its terrors and exasperating its remorse? Are they three personifications of the same hypostasis, one head bearing emblems which denote earth's sovereignty, another displaying hell's terrors and punishments, the third crowned with the mildest luminary of heaven? Three heads with one heart; sister intelligences judicially cognizant of things present, future, and past; wisdom which reflects, determines, and foresees—meditative, retrospective, and prophetic Destiny?

Spanus kneels on one knee, sustaining his captive on the other, and watching reverentially for some token. As the goddess has three faces, she may easily signify her pleasure by at least one of them. For stronger confirmation, she may smile thrice, or frown thrice, at the same time. No possible error can arise in a test so easy, unless the two outside faces should disagree. This, indeed, appears the less improbable, as they are exceedingly unlike. Even so, there is the right of arbitration in the middle one, which can hardly be expected to retain its neutrality at such a time; and if it does, why Spanus will retain the fawn.

He looks vigilantly and eagerly, to no great purpose. If there be any change, it is in his favour. There is now more light fallen upon the three heads. They seem to him by degrees less austere than they had done at first. Such concord is understood as acquiescence, or at least as permission, which the grateful peasant acknowledges with many hasty genuflections, and takes his leave.

Perhaps it might have been some unconscious apprehension of a recall which so greatly accelerated his departure. What men do instinctively is in obedience to Nature, and if not wisdom, is much better. Spanus neither looked behind nor stopped to listen. The silent area was soon traversed, and even some steps were taken downwards among juniper bushes and yew trees, with which the higher cliffs were fringed, before he paused. As soon as his ears had been extricated from the boughs which rustled about them so noisily, another sound reached him ; it was numerous, continuous, universal, rather than loud, and not dissimilar to that distant roar of approaching tempests with which his labours in the forest, and walks among the mountains, were familiar. Again a small advance exposed the whole valley in its

southern direction, encumbered by multitudes, and sparkling with arms.

The sun was now high enough to reach all that side of it farthest from the place on which he stood ; and so elevated was his position, as to command a league, at least, in one direction, where the brook wandered between grassy banks bare of trees. Disbanded horsemen had already reached as far as to the cliffs, and galloped forward beneath and beyond his hiding-place. These were they who required room enough for the practice or the exhibition of their skill ; who twirled their javelins high into the air, and caught them as they descended ; who dismounted and regained their seats without diminishing their horses' speed. Slingers and archers, scarcely less active than these, watched for the alighting of some stray bird ; or, running forward, elevated their helmets at a spear's length, as distant marks to the aim of their companions. The young and noble were distinguished by their more costly arms and glittering furniture. Gold and silver ornaments interwoven with flowers, were displayed, not only on the crests of their helmets, but on the heads and manes of their horses. So splendid and triumphant did they appear, that Spanus recognised his countrymen less surely by their banners,

than by their love of magnificence. Inexperienced as he was, the admiring peasant could discern by these tokens that they, too, were barbarians.

To cross the valley while encumbered by such a charge had become dangerous. For now these loose precursors of war were closely followed by whole squadrons or *turmæ*, as we must call them—Spanish auxiliaries disciplined like Romans. The sunbeams glanced upon their helmets of brass, or their cuirasses of polished steel. But this radiance was mitigated by the green branches every where interspersed. Soldiers and horses were thus decorated. Some youths rode bare-headed, or rather with heads unarmed; not because they were yet distressed by the sun's rays, but that they might keep uncrushed the crowns of oak or laurel to which their valour had entitled them. And when these were succeeded by the legions, Spanus could see that similar boughs were attached to the points of their spears, and flowers interwoven among their ensigns. Even in these solitudes there had been the rumour of some great victory. Sertorius had again triumphed over Metellus and Pompeius, and had rescued the discomfited army of Perpenna. It was the prætor himself, the champion of justice and Spain, returning by a

new road ! Spanus hitherto reviewed no more than his own countrymen, but he had seen greater numbers at a single glance than during the thirty years of his previous existence.

Part marched by, ignorant of the place, or unsuspicious of its sanctity. Some from distant provinces, stopped under it to quench their thirst in the rivulet, or to water their horses there. But others paused, dismounted, cautioned their companions, and then passed on with averted eyes. As the legions approached, whole cohorts lowered their ensigns, and detached the branches from their spears, that they might propitiate the dreadful goddess, or, at least, offer no fresh provocation to her resentment. The astonished peasant sat concealed, resting his captive on his knees, and almost unconsciously raising the cloak high enough for air. So new and glorious was the sight, that he would have felt little impatience but for the thought of Setubal. Cohort still followed cohort, and legion legion.

In that flexure where the valley turned to sight, masses more dense, multitudes more compact, with pace more stately, cohort after cohort, legion after legion, continually advanced. Their standards were smaller and less numerous than those of the auxiliaries. But when Spanus was

able to discern that they were eagles with expanded wings, and grasping thunderbolts in their talons, he recognised their supremacy. Every legion was preceded by its captives chained in companies. Behind the auxiliaries, but in advance of the Republican ensigns, walked six unarmed men in white robes, each bearing, as emblems of authority, several slender rods bound together, and surmounted by an axe. Every peasant had been taught that the Roman proconsul, prætor, or proprætor, could never cease to be a civil magistrate; that even in the camp, and almost on the field of battle, such instruments were significant of his authority, and such men were the ministers. The heart of Spanus beat. These, thought he, are lictors, apparitors to justice; and he who walks behind them must be Sertorius! If so, his left hand rested on a horse's mane, while he conversed gaily with the rider. There was a crowd of persons, apparently noble by their splendour, riding nearer to the brook. He alone had nothing to distinguish him beside these lictors. His helmet was unadorned by a single leaf. If it were Sertorius, well might the heart of Spanus beat: he beheld, for the first time, the wisest and the justest among mankind. The peasant crept lower and lower, approaching as he

was approached. He panted to see more nearly and distinctly a countenance which the larger half of Spain was prepared to worship.

The day, so far, had been fortunate. Spanus attributed its success chiefly to the wisdom of his selfwill. He had triumphed over the dissuasions of Fear and Porsa. The fawn with which to propitiate Setubal's young wife was upon his knees; but pause a moment! behold another suggestion! If Matula, Setubal's wife, were renowned for her collection of birds and beasts, so was the prætor for his. Sertorius had lions from Numidia, panthers, leopards, zebras, and a sort of stag so tall that no man mounted on horseback could reach his head. He had fifty hounds, any one of which would face a wolf. Even from these forests a full-grown eagle had been presented to him, seven years ago, so strong and terrible that he was neither caged nor pinioned, but chained. According to rumour, great gifts had rewarded him who brought it. How much better if Setubal might be paid his rent in the customary way! A fawn like this was well worth all the acquisitions of Setubal's wife, including the ringed owl and the black squirrel. Time enough to think of her if Sertorius should reject it. But with what words might

the peasant approach, and in whose name? How present his gift? How account for the possession of it?

Spanus and Porsa never differed in opinion but upon one moral problem. Porsa could see her way through the perplexities of life by no other path than the plainest and straightest. Her husband possessed more of that circumspection which becomes the wise. He maintained that no man might lie, if his lie could prove injurious to any one whatever. That no man might lie, if his lie could prove otherwise than advantageous to himself, or some one else. That a lie, beneficial to ourselves, but detrimental to others, was wrong. That no man might lie mischievously, wantonly, profanely, or unprofitably. But that, to do good, any man might lie; and that it became his duty, as well as his wisdom, if equal good by truth or other straighter means could not be done. That any man might lie honestly and conscientiously on his own behalf. That many of the goddesses, and almost all the gods, were quite at ease, even in their dealings with each other. That Jupiter himself suffered his liberty to be restricted by no more than one great oath, lying unscrupulously on common occasions for his personal convenience and the public example.

On the contrary, Porsa supposed that the god and goddesses might do as they thought proper, but that no man should lie at all. In the controversy of the morning, so far, Spanus had been justified by his success, and he determined to proceed as fortune or wisdom should direct.

Not one moment could be consumed in deliberation. Dropping from root to root, and rock to rock, he rushed knee-deep across the rivulet, and struggled up its opposite bank just in time to thrust his offering between the lictors and Sertorius. So strange an apparition, presenting himself with such irreverence, provoked indignation in the attendants, and mirth in the prætor. The breathless peasant could only lift up his muffled fawn beseechingly. It might have happened that some injustice was his complaint, some cruelty committed by the soldiers in advance, that he would propitiate the compassion of Sertorius by a gift. The face so frank, so gracious, and yet so royal on which Spanus gazed, was marked, but not disfigured by scars; and even the extinguished light of one eye occasioned a blemish rather than a deformity. Such a countenance may cheer us like a blessing, for it dispels even the remembrance of evil by its good humour, and of apprehension by its serenity.

Sertorius raised the suppliant, then withdrew his lictors and other attendants closer to the brook, that the legions behind him might suffer no interruption in their march. But when Spanus was asked what he carried, and from whom it came; when to both questions he returned only the same reply, that he could not tell, his good fortune did much more on his behalf than the maxim controverted by Porsa, or the wisdom which suggested it. He had arrested the Roman prætor, conqueror, emperor, in full march. He had drawn aside a quæstor, a proquæstor, seven or eight military tribunes, as many of the legati, procuratores, provincial generals and ambassadors, with several auxiliary princes. Beside this, he had presented himself and his cloak, to offer something of which he had no knowledge, sent by some one from whom he had no message!

When men rule by opinion, what we call good-nature is, in usefulness, more than equivalent to many rarer qualities. Without it, the genius of Sertorius would have commanded less success. Every old soldier had tales in its illustration which he loved to circulate among the young. Though the bewildered Spanus could furnish no better account of his mission, Sertorius neither commanded the lictors to drive him back, nor suf-

ferred that the other attendants should roll him, as they proposed, into the rivulet. Preferring the simplest method by which he could satisfy his curiosity, he raised the cloak. The terrified fawn started back. She gazed upon the first face seen by her since that of Destiny. Wonder there was on both sides. Sertorius and his followers had never beheld an eye so gentle, a skin so fair, or a shape so delicate. The innocent creature looked hard and trembled piteously.

Sertorius would have disengaged her from the cloak. Some little confusion and mismanagement occurred while the prætor tried to secure her two fore-legs, and the peasant to transfer them. There was one moment when they were held by neither. Fearful of hurting a frame so tender, the pressure which had detained it was relaxed. By an effort instantaneous and unforeseen, the gentle captive extricated herself from the arms of Spanus, and leaped into those of Sertorius. Again affrighted by the cry of admiration and surprise, she crept closer to his bosom; then turned her little head from its hiding-place toward the spectators, as if confident in the asylum which she had found.

Even the cruel are propitiated by the application of love which trusts and supplicates. A demand

of protection for the helpless concerns our honour as well as our compassion. Had the movement been less strange, and the applicant less beautiful, Sertorius would have done the same. His bosom was like an altar of the Gods, to which the miserable might fly for mercy. He strove to reassure the offering of Spanus by his caresses. Elevating her head to an equality with his, she gazed upon the bystanders timidly, but not impatiently. A smile on the countenance of their general always illuminated those who were near enough to see it. Not the officers standing around him alone, or the tribunes and centurions marching past him close beside, but the legionary soldiers also, the stern and stately veterans of distant wars and countless victories laughed grimly at his acquisition. Assuming the usual licence of recent success, one asked if he meant to carry her in that manner at his triumph when he ascended the capitol? Another proposed that the two heads should be stamped on the same coin, and distributed as his donative.

CHAPTER VI.

ARGUMENT.

Spanus turns his last Night's Dream to advantage. — He exchanges his Father's dead Ass for a Mule, young, active, docile, and laden with Riches. — The just Man Setubal, punctual, provident, gracious, rhetorical, demonstrative. — He is accompanied by the Recorders of Ebilenum. — Porsa's Perplexities. — Her Insensibility to Eloquence. — She is encumbered by three Babes and five Lares. — Released from her Embarrassment by Spanus. — A generous Proposal repeated and accepted.

SPANUS, who partook in the pleasure which he had occasioned, so far recovered his courage as to exercise yet again that prosperous morality controverted by Porsa. In accounting for his possession of the fawn, his father's ass served him still. He supposed this legacy from many generations to have strayed; that in the pursuit, he had laid aside his cloak as an incumbrance, and as liable to injury by the thorns. The imaginary search proved vain; the hereditary beast was lost! A tender conscience will keep us near to the confines of truth, even if we must needs travel on their farther side. Spanus never lied

wantonly or superfluously. Great peace of mind did he derive from this delicacy in his compromise with Honor, who was much observed and respected, when no more than imperfectly obeyed. "The ass," he said, "could not be recovered. His remaining care, therefore, was to find and resume his cloak. While engaged in this second search, he was startled by the cry of dogs, the blast of horns, by shouts echoed and multiplied among the mountains. A stricken hart rushed by; a huntress followed him. One shoulder, which the quiver crossed, was bare; one leg and knee; the face was turned away. He heard her speak, 'Come this way, Spanus,' and then she passed from sight; the boughs concealed her. The terrified but fortunate peasant, guided by the tumult, pursued her and again beheld her. She had ascended to the highest cliff, leaning one hand on an unbent bow, and beckoning him with the other. It seemed as if the new moon was partly hidden by her head." Thus far there was an infusion of veracity so copious as to dilute, if not rectify, the rest. Truth stopped short here, but the peasant did not. He, too, felt as if wings had been given to him, so easily did he climb the rocks and reach the summit. At her feet lay the lost cloak, containing, as it now appeared, the

fawn. "Haste with this," she said, "to Sertorius."

Sertorius had remarked that such a description of the goddess could hardly have been imagined by one so simple. Yet some additional questions might have perplexed the peasant's ingenuity, if Panula, an old Spanish officer in high trust, had not at that moment recognised the cliffs. Hitherto his thoughts had been occupied by the march, and by the duties attendant upon it. Passing through this labyrinth of mountains in a new direction, he came unexpectedly beneath the recesses in which Spanus had found his fawn. Perhaps he might have passed them, not ignorantly, as others did, but forgetfully, if uninstructed by the peasant's indication. "They conceal the shrine of some oracle so sacred that the everlasting Gods tremble while they draw near to it," said he. "Of men it is approachable by none beside the innocent ; by pure hands, chaste bosoms, and pious lips. Were the fawn mine, I would refuse to exchange her for such another victory."

The legions continued their heavy and orderly march, enlivened at every step by the ring of arms. Sertorius with his attendants had occupied whatever space remained between them and the rivulet. A string of twenty mules bearing the

prætor's baggage, or, as such incumbrances were called, his impedimenta, could advance no farther. The soldiers were on one side, the brook was on the other, and this patrician assembly, collected by Spanus and his fawn, stood directly in front. Sertorius, who was now become impatient of the detention, inquired whether the mules behind him were his own, and what they carried. They were his own. The first of them was laden with some garments for his personal use; and under them, with two talents of stamped silver for his servants in the prætorium. Though the youngest and strongest, his burden was the lightest. He carried no more than two talents of coined silver, covered by such garments as an encampment among the mountains might require. Honorable exemptions like these have always existed among mules and muleteers. Sertorius commanded his attendants to detach this first mule from the rest; adding that "the recompense of a messenger, from one so gracious and holy, must neither be counted nor divided."

The first legion had passed by. The second, close behind, afforded only the interval of a moment. Spanus and his reward were thrust hastily between them and beyond them; for, as he intimated by signs, in that direction lay his home.

There was no leisure for the effusions of gratitude, or the outcries of wonder. A minute's hesitation would have exposed his naked feet to wooden sandals fortified by iron, which neither shortened their measure nor retarded their speed. Even as it was, and notwithstanding the magnificence of his decoration, the noble beast sustained some passing indignities. Staggering under cuffs, pushes, jests, and execrations, he and his new proprietor were pursued by comparisons and disparagements till the forest had sheltered them.

When Spanus found himself beyond observation, he expended the remainder of his breath in astonishment. It had reached his ears that the mule's burden was of some garments and two talents of coined silver. The mule himself was the glory of his kind, the captain of his company, young, docile, stately, powerful, and active. He was decorated as became his own rank, and that of his former master. He had bells, tassels, and chainwork; knots, bosses, thongs, buckles, studs, and fringes. A metal plate, shining like gold, was upon his forehead; another like silver upon his brisket; a reticulated leathern bag, woven by the fingers of Minerva, was upon his nose. The small hampers in which his lading lay deposited, appeared marvellous to a judge so scientific as the

basket-maker; for half of their ribs were tipped with horn, and half alternately with brass. Well might the former muleteer grieve, and the present one triumph! Eager as he was to share so much happiness with Porsa, Spanus walked round and round this noble substitute for his father's ass; and from every point of view he discovered superiority which neither early affections and prepossessions, nor filial piety, could disavow. Peradventure he might have been sent as a present to the prætor from some Asiatic conqueror! Or if he had been made a captive in these wars, Sertorius must indeed feel triumphant over Metellus and Pompeius! Divested of his trappings, he was well worth all the fawns, in all the forests, of Spain! Happily, too, there was no traffic between the prætor and the peasant—neither bargain nor exchange. A free gift on both sides removed all scruple from the more fortunate. Spanus might otherwise have felt some doubt whether the conditions of his great principle in morals had been fulfilled. If such meditations sometimes retarded his journey, at other times they accelerated it. The only labour was to keep pace with a mule so active and powerful. The road was up-hill; but his tail had been disengaged from a

company of nineteen followers neither so strong nor so lightly burdened as himself.

The house of Spanus might be approached, either by ascending, as he did, a little valley among the hills, or by following a streamlet downwards in the opposite direction. With its small court of pastoral appurtenances, it occupied almost all the level space between two rocky banks, leaving no more than room enough for a narrow path, and a foaming rivulet. A long strip of fertile pasture, with two or three diminutive inclosures, straggled upward on each side the brook, above this unfortunate abode; and where the channel had become more level, and its waters more tranquil, an osier bed lay below. In both directions, the forest soon closed upon a domain of which some long-forgotten usurper had defrauded it. Yet was the little property well defined. Naked rocks served as boundaries to distinguish it from the mountain wildernesses above and around. Spanus ascended the valley, passing the osier bed, and approaching to that entrance of his abode where, in happier days, goats, swine, sheep, cocks and hens greeted their returning master; but where, at present, there was no longer a single tenant except the unburied ass.

His estimate of Setubal's punctuality proved

correct. Hardly had the afflicted Porsa leisure to weep over her infants, now fatherless as she believed, when the just man presented himself. His journey had commenced some hours before the dawn; and he came from Ebilenum downward in the opposite direction to that by which Spanus returned. Two grave officers of justice, who united duties no longer considered as compatible, were his associates. They were recorders and registrars, — accusers and witnesses, — in all lighter transactions, judges and correctors. During ages less litigiously enlightened than our own, every district was content to economise the expenses of Justice by strengthening her arm, sharpening her sword, and taking the bandage from her eyes. Robed in long gowns, and bearing long rods, these her ministers were furnished each with his roll, in one of which was written every agreement not yet complete, whether debt, bargain, stipulation, covenant, contract, or promise: in the other, every obligation at length perfected, sale, payment, release, donative, exchange, or whatever similar negotiation between man and man, might be determined and accomplished. They were written by their own hands, and then deposited in each other's custody. Nor could the security have been better, for the venerable

magistrates looked neither to the right nor to the left.

Setubal resolved to satisfy both earth and heaven that he was righteous; yea, that he was merciful. There should be no imputation against his equity from the lips of malicious men; nor against his gracious toleration, after many warnings and disappointments, from the reproaches of his own heart. Before such witnesses, he would liberate Spanus, discharging his debt three years due. For the sake of Canza, the father of Spanus, he would spare, he would forgive, and he would do so without rebuke. Remembering Canza's punctuality, and the just dealings of former generations, he would press lightly and tenderly on their degenerate representative, whom the Gods had forsaken. When his patience, as well as his integrity, had been thus declared,—he would occupy the house by deputy, and cultivate the estate for his own behoof. Virtue in excess is vice. Setubal apprehended that such forbearance might encourage the prodigal: yet, it was consolatory to remember that since nothing remained, nothing could have been exacted.—A flayed wolf can render no satisfaction for the mortgage on his skin. So well ordered was this just man's punctuality that the two magistrates who followed him, were themselves followed by a successor to Spa-

nus,—a skilful minister in rural pursuits,—his shepherd, neatherd, goatherd, and swineherd. Provision had been made for profitable husbandry; large store of sheep, goats, swine, and, seen there the first time, three cows, all perfect in their kind.

Porsa had nothing else to remove than three children and five household gods. The equitable man stood before her door, and Porsa sat upon its lowest step. She had abdicated the house,—she was willing to remove elsewhere,—she tarried so long neither through contumacy, nor perverseness, nor irresolution. Stubbornness had no place in her bosom at any time. The first summons had prepared her for departure; and now she cared not which way she might go, nor how soon. A difficulty, undiscovered by Setubal, was the manner of carrying away three children and five gods in any direction whatever. For beside *Ferculus*, *Limentius*, and *Cardua*, *parvi Penates*, there were two peculiar to the abode, or rather inseparable from the family.

While the forbearing elder expatiated and appealed, she neither answered one word, nor understood one. She was unconscious that this occupation of the lowest step must be an embarrassment to the new incumbent. Even her children had ceased to be her care for the first time. The

youngest was asleep upon her knees. The second was employed in an operation which sufficiently proved how bewildered and regardless must be his unhappy mother. Many fruitless attempts did he make to open his mouth wide enough for the head of a little ill-favoured deity, — a domestic and hereditary idol, the more sacred for his blackness and ugliness, — a shapeless, featureless, almost faceless puppet, which had descended, with one wooden and three metallic associates, through many grateful generations. As he was the least Lar among these Penatrales, he was wisely selected for the experiment. Poor Porsa had carried him so far, and then had forgotten him.

Her eldest son could comprehend nothing more of this large company before him, than that his mother wept, and that the eloquent Setubal appeared by his gestures, as if it were he principally who caused her to weep. Here were four men seen at the same time, beside sheep, goats, swine, and the three unknown creatures so huge and terrible, which he afterwards learnt to call *cows*! The child attempted various devices and importunities to divert such cruelty. He tugged the just man's robe, — he climbed about his knees, and would fain have ascended higher still, that he might tug his beard. He pointed toward these

foreign beasts as the causes of his mother's terror, entreating that they might be driven away. He supplicated and promised, and, at last, he threatened. Setubal's rhetoric overflowed all obstructions. He had no children yet, and, as it would seem, no ears.

Neither argument nor demonstration — the creditor nor his witnesses, occupied at that time the thoughts of Porsa. She had left her husband when possibly she might have saved him — or if not, when certainly she might have perished with him. Her imagination suggested some punishment worse than death to be endured by him for ever. Who else had invaded the sanctity of those awful rocks, or presented himself empty-handed before a deity so terrible! She should have been his companion, whatever might have followed. Both had loved their children too much — she at the wrong time, and with a cruel preference. Misery is never perfect without remorse, and the choice of the unhappy has been always wrong. Setubal besought her to do him justice, and to depart in peace.

Meanwhile, Spanus had fastened his mule's bridle at the back entrance, and then hastened round, that he might revisit his wife and children by the opposite one. So large an assembly sur-

prised him — for the ministers of justice — the peasant provided as his substitute and successor — the cows, goats, sheep, and swine, were earlier than he had foreseen, though Setubal himself was not. The noise of the rivulet, and the position of the house, had intercepted every other sound, as well as the just man's oratory.

Porsa, in her distress, had been unable to account for the absence of her husband, and now his reappearance surprised no one there beside herself. She indeed held him as if apprehensive of a second desertion. Still speechless, but now from excess of joy, she cared little for ruin or anything else; she lost all recollection that her children were unfed, and her household gods wanderers like herself.

Setubal enjoyed a fortunate occasion to recount once more the integrity of his proceedings. Challenging Spanus to answer him if he could, he again set forth his forbearance, nay, his tenderness towards Canza's son, the patience which he had shown, the conditions which he had repeated. And did he now retract? was he discouraged by the carelessness or idleness of an ungrateful debtor, who abused his forbearance year after year? Renounced by fortune and wisdom, abandoned by Gods and men — an outcast from

the bounties of earth, and the commiseration of heaven, Spanus never should find sternness or unkindness in him. Behold, even yet would he extend to him the option originally proposed! Unwearied by disappointments, he would still offer the same three privileges for his selection, as he had repeated again and again. To his own brother — to his own son — to the dearest and earliest friend of his bosom, could he have shown more love than this, unless, indeed, he were a sharer in similar prodigality? The right of choice was still open, as the recorders might testify; namely, the estate in sale for one silver talent and a half. Or, secondly, the permission to continue in its tenancy and occupation, by discharging three years' rent, now due; stipulating for no more than such reasonable securities and augmentations as might be determined jointly before them; or finally, a peaceful and thankful surrender, a dutiful acknowledgement of the forbearance shown to him, the debt remitted to him, the love and favour conferred upon him, with a cheerful departure elsewhere.

When Spanus preferred the first of these compassionate propositions, calling the venerable recorders to prepare a contract in one roll, and to verify its fulfilment in the other, Porsa again

became uneasy. She apprehended that the dreadful Goddess had taken her husband's wits from him, because he had nothing else to give. Grave and awful as they were, even the recorders smiled. Setubal suffered a momentary disturbance in the complacency with which his tenderness was suffused. Something like scorn and indignation were inflamed by the acceptance of his own offer. Either as Porsa supposed, Spanus was a fool, or else Spanus would make a fool of him!

The peasant produced the mule, the two talents, and the robes which covered them. He announced his rank as the client of Sertorius with whom he had exchanged gifts, and entered into a profitable correspondence. So silent became the valley, that even Setubal could hear the grass torn from its roots, and masticated by his own cows. The presence of the prætor, accompanied by his six lictors and his eight legions, could have added but little in confirmation to that stately mule — to such a beast in such trappings! His knots, bosses, thongs, studs, bells, buckles, and fringes; his chainwork like silver from the mint; his plates like gold from the furnace; the two stamped talents in just weight; the senatorian garments edged with purple, and one of them

lined with fur, were all displayed. The price was paid, one talent and a half, the contract articulated, and the purchase verified, each apart. Setubal was relieved from the fatigue of reconducting his cows, sheep, goats, and swine, by receiving a just equivalent for them, from one half of the half talent which still remained. If he repented of his first bargain as precipitate, and still more deeply of the three years' remitted rent as profuse, some amends were made by this sequel. Time was required for the evaporation of astonishment, but every moment diminished his tenderness toward Spanus as a prodigal abandoned by heaven. So rapidly did pity give place to respect, and so eagerly did respect engage itself in the peasant's accommodation, that he relinquished the herdsman as well as the herds. At the poor man's own request, was he left behind, and chiefly because his skill and duty could be no longer needed at Ebilenum.

Porsa's gratitude was regulated by Setubal's expectations and demands. Never did it slumber when she had any thing to give. She remembered that Matula, the just man's young wife, had a passion for rare animals — living animals if they could be procured, otherwise their skins as their best representatives. She therefore selected

for her acceptance the prætorian garment lined with fur, which comprised many foreign varieties, and which might be turned inside out for their display. Riches had the very unusual effect of rendering Spanus still more generous than he was before. To each of the venerable magistrates he presented such a cloak as might be admired at Ebilenum, and even at Osca. The household deities resumed their stations very little dirtier than they had always been. Not one morsel passed the hungry lips of Porsa, till the last ewe's cheese, the first cow's milk, the barley cake presented by the herdsman, and the sweet wine drawn from the wicker flask of Setubal, were burnt before the Lares as an offering, or spilled as a libation. So absorbed were the children by their admiration of the mule and his furniture, that they never missed these Gods. As Setubal had not come unprepared to a house so destitute, the midday hours were spent in joyful festivity by all, even by Setubal himself, whose justice every man praised, and whose liberality no man disputed.

CHAPTER VII.

ARGUMENT.

Ancient Osca. — Founded by the Phœnicians. — Its Situation. — Its Architecture. — At its Feet the Camp of Sertorius. — Both Camp and City prepare for his Reception, and the Celebration of Victory. — King Orcilis seated as a Spectator beneath the Portico of his Palace, his Daughter Myrtilis on one Hand, his Niece Vergilia on the other.

ANCIENT Osca, Osca before its removal from the mountains, must have possessed, in no ordinary perfection, the two first properties contemplated by its founders, strength and salubrity. For at that period of the world, their claims to such a preference had not been superseded by the louder importunities arising from gain. Health, ease, peace, if possible, and safety, where peace was not, were preferred to riches. Only by slow degrees did those early mists disperse. We now perceive that health and ease can confer upon us few gifts better than themselves; but that from riches may be derived immunity in error, and the probabilities of virtue. It required the wisdom accumulated by experience and tradition, the proofs deduced

from history, and controversy, and philosophy, before men could be prevailed upon to concur in the belief that desire continually stimulated, and always unsatisfied, is happiness. The civilization of two or three thousand years since Osca was built, has been employed in furnishing us with wisdom less naked than theirs, and morals more systematic. But Osca, the Carthaginian, or peradventure the Phœnician Osca, was erected by ignorant people in a barbarous age. Closer to nature, they reverted more frequently to her principles. Its builders cared much about pure water, light air, and a site too high for the arrows of their enemies. Air and water, in those days, were elements applicable to other purposes beside trade. Undisciplined in the fastidiousness of modern refinement, men would have disliked to breathe, as we do, the vapour from forges, furnaces, slaughter-houses, and flues, or to drink the daily superflux of gutters and sewers.

Osca was built on the lower part of a long hill, or range of hills, backed by pathless and barren mountains, so lofty that no possible approach could have been apprehended from behind. Walls on this side had been the wantonness of labour. Nor was there greater occasion for them in front, standing, as it did, on a precipice of the hardest granite,

which must have measured, at least, seventy perpendicular cubits above the plain. Yet, either in obedience to Religion, speaking through her oracles, or in compliance with Tradition, perplexed and shackled by prophecies, walls there were. Impregnable in front and rear, the only approaches were at the two sides, east and west. These, indeed, were not inaccessible: but they were steep, difficult, of far smaller extent, and proportionably provided with loftier towers and double or outer gateways.

European cities could seldom have been founded with any expectation of their future greatness. The far larger part must have arisen from accident and by degrees. Yet some there were which had been planned methodically by powerful projectors. Ancient districts were to be defended, recent conquests to be secured, and, as in the case of Osca, foreign colonies to be established on the territories which they had usurped. This long and high, but comparatively narrow, city, was a succession of terraces looking toward the north. Its hundred fountains were profusely supplied by the rocky heights above them, and the mountain ranges mingling with the skies, behind. Only the lowest of these terraces commanded, as all might have done, a prospect beyond the walls. Every where

else was preferred the shade of narrow streets, diminutive market-places, low and simple colonnades, or gateways opening into courts and areas which might have been covered by a soldier's tent. Connecting these, were long flights of steps roughly hewn from the native rock.

It was a large assemblage of little parts. Altars stood in the open air, because the temples behind them were too small for priests and worshippers, as well as Gods. The few edifices which rose higher than a single story, had their stairs on the outside, leading to stone galleries at the first stage, and flat roofs at the second. Every ancient country among mankind appeared to have sent some contribution of its own architecture, rather as specimens or models, than for use. Dwarf columns round and square, plain and fluted, straight and spiral; some with capitals, and some without; Egyptian, Syrian, Phœnician, African, Doric, supported such architraves and cornices as testified that the inhabitants were economical neither in labour nor granite, however sparing of their ground. Every corner of every street displayed some object strange, fantastic, mysteriously ancient, and, for the most part, mythologically grotesque. Among a thousand birds, beasts, and reptiles, scarce one was less than monstrously such. Serpents had

eagles' beaks, eagles had lions' faces. Yet time softened these incongruities with its mosses, or concealed them with its ivy. Wild fig-trees had rooted themselves among the rocks. In each little recess, there was either a well with its bucket, a plane-tree with its bench, or a niche with its idol.

That lowest range, the prospect from which had no such obstructions, was the glory of Osca. There stood the royal palaces, the courts of justice, the habitations of the magistracy, the largest and loftiest temples of the gods,—fountains, columns, tablets, trophies. But Oscan architects must have rejoiced, even there, rather in the gravity and solidity of their buildings, than their magnitude. Every column consisted of a single block measuring at least as much in girth as height. Some Asiatic luxuries and elegances had been naturalised earlier than in Rome. Here were baths and porticoes on a scale of colonial humility. Tyre had forgotten her children; Carthage had claimed them, and had perished before they were grown up. There must have seemed a strange disproportion between the royal portals and their Roman guests, when Scipio and Sertorius passed under them; yet had they been found lofty enough for a third helmet as high as either on the head of Hannibal.

Local superstitions proved irreconcilable with

uniformity. In those ages, the invisible world was nearer than at present to the apparent. There were the same sequence and certainty between them as between day and night. Men knew assuredly that they should sleep, that they should dream, and that to-morrow they should awake. Considering, too, that we see more distinctly when we look from darkness into the light, than from light into the darkness, they concluded that the residents of a spiritual universe, shaded by death, must enjoy no small advantage if they came to buffets. Much caution, therefore, was required lest offence should be given by intrusion or inadvertence. This lower range of edifices was broken, in twenty places, either by some rock which no man might remove, or some chasm which only one man might fill up. Little groves, sacred as well as shady, were interspersed; barbarous shrines, more barbarous statues, altars too holy for use, and monumental stones, the more religiously impressive because their inscriptions had disappeared.

Raised to an equality with the walls by broad and continuous steps, these aristocratic edifices looked upon an endless confusion of mountains forests, rocks, precipices and valleys — range above range, and region beyond region — till they were terminated by the loftiest summits of the

Pyrenees. The nearer hills were cultivated, but not so parsimoniously as to leave, among their vineyards and olive woods, no space for pastures intermixed with orchards, and corn-fields overshadowed by groves. Such grandeur was not subdued, but augmented, by its contrast with fertility. Human industry appeared to have accorded with the intentions of nature — interfering sparingly where it might ornament — intruding timidly where it might improve — occupying permitted ground as subject to the sterner sovereignty beyond, filling with life, and motion, and cheerfulness the precincts about her feet, but leaving the realms reserved by her for solitude unapproached.

Immediately beneath the walls, lay a long, level, undivided meadow — the valley's bottom, the verdant bed from which, century after century, the river had receded. It was seldom more than seven or eight hundred paces in breadth, but undefined at either end. So lofty were the mountains which it separated from each other, that if their positions had been east and west, their shadows at morning and evening would have crossed it. No longer a free pasture for king and citizen, the oxen of Orcilis, as well as the less stately kine of his subjects, had given place to six

Roman and seven auxiliary legions — to thirteen thousand Spanish horsemen — to slingers, archers, velites, hastati, and all the nameless accompaniments of a mighty war. Only one encampment remaining upon earth was of superior magnitude. That where Metellus and Pompeius were united, was, indeed, almost twice the size; but neither stronger, nor apparently so extensive.

Princes and ambassadors from many nations crowded to these *Castra Stativa* where Sertorius had established a sovereignty independent of Rome. Here, too, were more than thirty fugitive or expatriated senators — here were young patricians earning their civil appointments by soldiership. Metellus had seen these tents but once, only for a few hours, and then from a great distance. With the river on one side, and the city on the other, they safely defied him. Yet labour was the chief element of Roman discipline; and system seemed necessary to the education of an army, secure and confident as it might be. The *fossa* and *vallum* — the *agger* and *sudes*, the first and second *excubiæ*, were retained even here. Every division had its locality precisely defined. A soldier arrived but yesterday from Bithynia might have forgotten, till he looked for his companions, that he was not on his accustomed

ground. The thirty miles which now separated Metellus and Sertorius never mitigated, on either side, the enmity of these powerful combatants, or relaxed their discipline.

A camp perfectly square, according to custom, was impossible at Osca. The ground was too narrow for one quarter of so large a host. There were five perfect squares extending chain-like, link by link, along the valley, — and each square was, in most of its arrangements, a perfect camp. The *prætorium*, *quæstorium*, and *principia* — the tribunal, and the open space reserved for martial exercises, stood in the centre square; and constituted, with one legion and one wing of Roman knights, the fifth division. Far greater was the regularity here than in the city above. All was order geometrically disposed within the enclosure; but the thirteen thousand Spanish cavalry distributed themselves more loosely beyond the camp, at either end, where forage could be provided for them. Their tents and standards were visible till the valley's flexure turned from sight.

The opposite side of the river alone was as nature had made it, or rather, as peace had left it. Through these regions were derived the more bulky of his supplies, and therefore Sertorius

suffered no encroachment to interfere with the husbandman, or to obstruct the muleteer.

War was neither unpopular nor unprofitable at Osca. Situated in the very centre of its operations, the blows which resounded so loudly every where beyond, fell not near enough to alarm her. Early apprehensions had been dissipated by experience. It was no longer feared that armies, whether Spanish or Roman, would leave in the territories which they had occupied, nothing but dearth. On the contrary, riches from many regions of the earth, had accumulated abundance. Merchants, contractors, purveyors from Greece, Italy, Gaul, and Asia, had become denizens at Osca. The tribute of distant cities, the spoils of conquered provinces, the exactions and free-will offerings, wherever they might have been collected, were expended here. No small revenue was drawn from princes who, dreading or envying the dominion of Rome, were wise enough to fight by deputy on a foreign soil. Even Italy and the Eternal city herself, were not exempt from such contributions. Few noble Romans fled empty-handed to so safe an asylum, either as exiles or partisans. Few failed, even after their establishment at Osca, to extort from their tenants and clients additional supplies. It were an error to

suppose that all the provinces of the Republic, or all the patrician houses of Rome, were so far satisfied with their present share in the government, as to desire no change. This was the age of unappeasable ambition — of Catiline, Clodius, Cæsar, Pompeius, succeeding to Sylla, Marius, and Cinna, by a single stride. Sertorius was aided every day by a large expenditure of prayers for his welfare, and imprecations against his enemies.

The Oscan nobles, too, were zealous both through prudence and patriotism. Sertorius was the protector of Spain, and had been solemnly invited to guide her councils and lead her armies. He came as a champion appointed by herself. Oscans, more especially, felt that the welfare of their nation was promoted by this alliance, and that even the dignity of their sovereign was upheld. Situated between two Roman armies, independence was impossible; but Osca stood at the head of the Spanish confederacy, while Rome was represented there by her prætor, her small but patriotic senate, her just cause, her exiled eagles still followed by victory and the manifest approbation of the Gods. This prætor hinted at no disproportion in the contracting parties, nor reminded his allies, through any other intimation

than his benefits, that the protector and the protected were related unequally.

The camp is preparing its sacrifices, and Osca her festivals. Again does Sertorius return with victory. Since his departure, three-and-twenty days ago, he has defeated one great army, and saved another. From dawn, to this, the fourth hour after it, the tumult, though neither licentious nor noisy, has become unappeasably restless. Osca seems too small for its inhabitants. The great hive swarms. Upon every vacant spot cluster its holiday idlers, changing, collecting, dispersing, re-assembling, dissatisfied with their choice, impatient of their companions, and ever in search of novelty elsewhere. Among such an infinity of sounds, not one is predominant ; they confuse and harmonise each other.

Orcilis alone, the little monarch of this ancient sovereignty, retains his composure. Rarely has he been seen otherwise than composed. The unadorned portico above his head is consistent with state so simple and primitive. If custom could have dispensed with his purple robe, his golden coronet, and his sceptre of ivory, the most modest man in Osca by nature, might have been mistaken for the most humble one in condition. His carriage and countenance were sage-like or priest-

like, rather than royal; and so, indeed, was his occupation every where but upon the judgment-seat. Silent, placable, enduring, and scrupulously just, he was at all times loved — on two or three great occasions only had he been feared. But to have laid aside the emblems of royalty by design, would have been considered as abdication, to have appeared in public without them through forgetfulness, as the most terrible of omens. These were necessary to his state, but these were all. He had neither halberds nor battle-axes, guards nor courtiers. His sister's daughter sat on a long bench at his right hand; and his own daughter at his left. The camp of Sertorius — of Rome confederate with Spain — was spread beneath his feet.

Orcilis had the rare fortune to conciliate the loyalty of his subjects by qualities for which any other prince would have been despised. Among a warlike people, he alone was exempt from the obligations of manhood. Surrounded by war, he alone had never endured its fatigues, partaken in its dangers, or aspired to its renown. Descended from a race which was descended from the Gods, by birth a hero, his whole life had been the confession of effeminacy. No man ever saw a shield on the arm of Orcilis, or wished to see one there; nevertheless he was not less safe from

the danger of derision than from any other peril. The pleasantry which might have suggested itself, on this account, to the rudest or the most playful of his subjects, would have been repressed as impiety. His people revered his wisdom, like the illumination of some peaceful and beneficent deity. Who among them was so irreligious as to explore its depth, or to question the profundity which he dared not fathom? But it was simplicity alone that rendered Orcilis mysterious. Inexhaustible in patience and taciturnity, he provoked no rival pretensions; each of his counsellors felt delighted with himself and pleased with the king. As it could not be remembered that he had ever once spoken when there was nothing to say, the sage acknowledged his wisdom, the argumentative his eloquence, and all men his sufficiency when the occasion should arise.

The small, slender, stooping frame, the diminutive hands and feet, the feminine head, which had been grey even from his youth, the thin and meditative visage, faultless in its features and proportions, notwithstanding the wrinkles, had now the additional grace of a white beard glossy as silver. If his extreme gravity ever dispersed, it was only to make way for a smile so faint, so transient, so meek, and sometimes so sorrowful.

that the spectator either doubted its occurrence, or regretted it.

Yet were his words numbered, neither by artifice, nor premeditation, nor by policy of any kind, but by a natural repugnance to that which was superfluous. His subjects confided in a prince who never attempted any thing for which he was unfit. He detested war rather on their account than his own, since exemption from its labours and calamities could be permitted only to himself. If he rejoiced in victory, it was still rather on account of their welfare secured, than of his own power extended, by it. Nestor would have been delighted with a listener who exacted no reciprocity, who ventured upon no competition, who had done so little in his youth, and said so little in his old age. Ulysses would have employed him, Agamemnon would have despised him, but Achilles would have loved him, as Sertorius did.

Warlike aspirations from such a shadow, a mighty heart in a bosom so gentle and maidenly, would have appeared unnatural; but rarer qualities were discoverable there,—justice, sincerity, benevolence, truth. Orcilis knew how to maintain even his dependence undegraded, for he was always stronger than his threats, and greater than

his pretensions. Perhaps Jupiter had modelled him as the epitome of royalty, on so small a scale, that imitation might be exempt from envy. Sertorius treated him as a king out of all proportion to his dominions, as a hero with nothing to do, as an orator and a sage who wanted words only for the expression of his eloquence, and the publication of his sagacity.

The royal widower had two sons; but they were yet children under the discipline of Roman teachers provided by Sertorius. His only daughter, at sixteen years of age, was grown uneasy that, both in his case and her's, life should have arrived so near to its termination, while one had become again single, and the other remained still unmarried. It seemed high time to think of some alliance for other purposes beside war. She was the largest of the two, and if life were measured philosophically, not by sundials and water-glasses, but by the things said and done in it, she was also the oldest. Her courage was indisputable, her activity in excess, and her words without number. It appeared as if Orcilis, with his forty and nine progenitors, had restricted themselves so parsimoniously that they might accumulate for her dower all the rare thoughts, and projects, and speeches belonging to the royal

race. And yet Myrtilis was loved by her father even to excess. Their good gifts were not borrowed at the expense of one another; "she was a child," he said, "whose prudence, gravity, gentleness, and moderation would come at last when the happier attributes of youth had disappeared."

That cousin of Myrtilis, seated on the king's right hand, seemed less unlike him in thoughtfulness and composure. Beside that she was three or four years older than Myrtilis, she had spent as many as made the difference between them under the discipline of grief. Three or four years ago she had lost her mother, the sister of Orcilis. Three or four months ago she had lost her father, the prince of Cætubis and Lucentum, whose many sufferings, from other causes, were exasperated by apprehension on her account. Assisted by Sertorius, he sustained a siege memorable for its obstinacy, and struggled both bravely, and, during three years, successfully, to retain his double principality entire against the lieutenants of Metellus. But the little realm of which he was proprietor lay farther from Sertorius and Orcilis than from Metellus and Pompeius. Lucentum, surrounded by enemies, was unconnected with the operations both of war and policy by which it could have been longer main-

tained. The quæstor Manlius, commanding two Italian, and more by five cohorts than two Spanish legions, attempted every thing practicable for an ally whose fidelity was blameless. In no other instance did the prætor sacrifice to esteem so much of prudence. Beside that Mazicus had been married to the sister of Orcilis, he was courageous, faithful, indefatigable, and unfortunate. To have deserted him would have been base; and yet after Pompeius had undertaken his subjugation, to have supported him effectually would have been impossible. Happily for himself, at least, his death released the legions under Manlius from a struggle which had become desperate, and transferred Vergilia, his orphan daughter, to safer protection. The princess, who had already outlived her father, mother, and country, was accompanied to Osca by some noble ladies, in the galleys which Sertorius provided for them. They arrived there during his absence.

It is among the worst characteristics of generous and impassioned imaginations that all wisdom by which their eagerness is disappointed should appear cold-hearted to them. Vergilia had witnessed the zeal of Manlius in her father's defence. She was not less pleased because it was quickened

on her own account. Enthusiastic in so lofty a command, daring, and sometimes fortunate where fortune was restricted to subordinate attempts, aid like this corresponded better with her young notions of heroism, than the skill and sagacity under which it had been employed. Manlius was a lover, and the eagerness of his passion had been often smiled upon by success in war, at least. But Sertorius, a politician as well as a conqueror, was in the opinion of Vergilia, so much the worse for his wariness. He, from whose eagles fortune was seldom absent, and never long, the creator as well as the leader of armies contending for universal supremacy, Sertorius who had rendered miracles common, and who had converted apparent impossibilities into ordinary events, might not Sertorius have saved her inheritance, her companions, her country, and her father? Was it sufficient to have assisted an ally thus faithful with four legions under his lieutenant? During this fearful struggle, while every thing dear to her was at stake, this desperate agony, so momentous in her estimation, where was he himself?

Vergilia wanted calmness enough to understand that such seeming miracles and impossibilities were accomplished by the inflexibility which she

blamed; the large and steady comprehension of distant objects in one design. Not every adventure might be hazarded in the neighbourhood of Metellus. Sertorius, the creator of armies contending for universal dominion, could hardly be expected to risk them through sympathy. He had silenced some military objections by the enterprise from which he was on his return to-day. Four legions under the quæstor Manlius had been hazarded longer than policy, or the calculations of science, could excuse; but not more skilfully had the prætor descended from Osca for the relief of Perpenna besieged by Metellus, than for the yet earlier reunion with Manlius, pursued by Pompeius, and intercepted by Muræna. A masterly advance in that direction had enabled the quæstor to lead his little army through hostile provinces from Lucentum, and to arrive in time for the victory which extricated Perpenna.

Of the many thousands who triumph at present, Manlius is the most fortunate. Lives, twice as long as his, have but few days in them so happy. No small honour has rewarded his skill in defence of Cætubis and Lucentum. He had not yielded, even before greatly superior numbers, till, by the death of Mazicus, there was nothing

left him to defend. He had secured the escape of Vergilia and her attendants in the galleys provided for them by Sertorius. He had led what remained of his legions through many difficulties and obstructions, followed by one enemy, and accompanied by another, till they could be reunited with his general. He had accomplished this junction early enough for a battle, in the conduct and glory of which his place was the second. What lover has ever forgotten the feeblest image of reflected love, or the faintest echo of ambiguous hope, or even the most improbable interpretation of a smile or sigh which might be mistaken for either? The princess herself could hardly have distinguished between those blushes which gratitude had demanded for the quæstor, and those provoked by indignation against Sertorius. They gave occasion to each other. After a separation of three months, Manlius and Vergilia will meet in Osca to-day, and a suit may be recommenced, which hitherto the princess had neither permitted nor repressed, and which could hardly have been better rewarded during her father's illness, and the crisis of her country.

CHAPTER VIII.

ARGUMENT.

The Quæstor Manlius. — Why distinguished by the Friendship of Sertorius. — A Quæstor's Connexion with his Prætor signifies the same as a Treasurer's with his General. — The comparative Pomp of a Roman Patrician and of a Barbarian King. — Manlius as a Senator. — His Reception by Orcilis. — His Colloquy with Myrtilis and Vergilia. — His Justification of Sertorius. — His Character of Perpenna. — His Account of the recent Battles and Victories. — The Arrival of Sertorius in his Camp.

ROME at this period of her history, even in repose, retained the helmet on her head. Civil employments were necessary qualifications for the military. Her empire was a camp which enclosed or overlooked the three known divisions of mankind. Hitherto the gates of Janus had been closed but twice in more than six hundred years, and both times by a bloody hand eager to draw back the bolt.

Departing for the province allotted to him, every proconsul, prætor, or proprætor, was accompanied by his quæstor. This quæstor, combining the duties of treasurer and chancellor.

regulated the customs, exacted the tribute, proportioned the taxes, and superintended the public disbursements whether civil or military. It seems strange that responsibilities like these should have been entrusted to the young. Yet no other office of equal dignity might be assumed so early as the quæstorship. A confidential understanding between the general and his treasurer was expedient on both sides. Their relationship has been compared to that of father and son.

All the republican forms of election were as superstitiously observed by the senate and people at Osca in the camp, as by the senate and people at Rome, in the forum. Because there was less of authority from law and usage — as their equivalents, there was far more of decency in the process, and wisdom in the choice. During three years, Manlius had sustained this subordinate authority with consummate prudence. Sertorius more willingly conferred the command at Setabis and Lucentum on his quæstor, because political as well as military difficulties were involved in it. Success which no man expected, would be recompensed by proportionable honor; and failure in an enterprise so distant and hazardous, must be excused by the universal confession that it had been foreseen. Manlius experienced fortune of

both kinds: he was hardly less happy in the apologies for his defeat, than in the rewards of victory. After having skilfully contended against twice his own numbers, commanded first by Muræna, and afterwards by Pompeius, he brought back his legions in time for a new triumph.

Sertorius never manifested distrust in his subordinate commanders: when he employed them he confided in them, or he appeared to do so. But it was to Manlius the quæstor alone that he disclosed his designs and opinions, his wishes and solitudes. Friendship may sometimes be irreconcilable with higher obligations, yet no good man can stand so remote, through the superiority of his position or his genius, from other men, as to despise it. The temperament of Manlius was cheerful, and yet sedate; earnest and sometimes vehement, but never precipitate. Carrying the nobility of his birth into his daily habits, he merited that confidence which so many men older and greater would have been proud to gain. For the friendship of Sertorius could be conferred only on the deserving. It impressed, as its signature, the attestation of virtue. He who earned it must be honorable; he who retained it must be discreet. Its radiance was so luminous, that if it had fallen by chance on the darker or baser qualities of our

nature, it would have exposed them and have been withdrawn.

That half of the cavalry which precedes the legions, is now marching through the camp to its accustomed station in the valley beyond. Swarms of irregular infantry too have arrived, which disperse among the tents. From such a distance and such an elevation as the walls of Osca, whole cohorts, while they deposit their arms upon the rivulet's margin and plunge into the stream, are seen without offence. Tables are shaded by branches newly cut, or other awnings fancifully decorated. A sacrifice and a feast signify the same thing. With flowers twisted about their horns, and fillets descending from their flanks and necks, bulls devoted to Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva, the three tutelar deities of Rome, approach their altars. Mars and Romulus also have their appropriate victims. Uninvited guests following the priests and axe-bearers, are always punctual there with sharp knives, strong teeth, and healthy digestions. Carrying huge wide-mouthed clarions, and horns curved like those of Amalthea — Cornicines, and Buccinatores, as well as other pious lovers of deep-toned melody, march in long procession, accommodating their gravity to a banquet which they will partake with the Gods. Orcilis the king had

sent, as his contribution, three hundred well-fed beeves, and two hundred casks of sweet wine. His nobles were proportionably munificent. Manlius the quæstor, too, had preceded his general by four or five hours, that he might unlock the public stores liberally, yet, as became his trust, temperately and methodically. He had found time for the bath, and was already on his way from the camp to Osca.

It must be confessed that these republican nobles indemnified themselves for their abnegation of royalty, by no very sparing equivalents. They had some such state of their own on ordinary occasions, as princes have reserved for national solemnities. King Orcilis, attended only by his daughter and his niece, was seated on a long bench beneath the portico of his palace, two or three steps higher than the crowd before him. He had more room than his subjects, who occupied the walls and terraces, with little else. Perhaps some few of his nobles were near enough for attendance if they had been called; but in the portico there was no guard, and yet no trespasser.

All eyes were suddenly averted from the camp, and directed towards the city gates. A stir among the spectators informed the king that he was approached by some visitor of higher than Oscan

nobility. Questions and contradictions arose loud enough to reach the royal ears.

“It is Valerius Quinctius who comes hither from Sertorius to salute the king and conduct him to the prætorium.”

“Quinctius is at Ausula.”

“Then it is Pansa the Younger, or Aulus Balbinus.”

“Balbinus is shorter and less active: Pansa was killed twelve days ago.”

“Be he who he may, he is a senator at least. Can it be Sertorius himself?”

“What! the prætor in his gown? in his gown, and without his lictors?”

“The garment is that of an augur or a flamen.”

“Lo, it is none of these — give larger room there! Scatter oak and laurel leaves on the pavement. It is the quæstor Manlius returned from Lucentum.”

There were, indeed, no lictors nor other officers of state, but the quæstor was preceded by his slaves, accompanied by his freedmen, and followed by his clients. He had at least sixty such attendants. All displayed their festival robes gaily,—the slaves gaudily. Manlius on this occasion ventured on a novelty, which would have appeared

effeminate at any other time. As far as to the city gates he had been carried in a rheda. His armour was dismissed with the apology of heat and fatigue, after a long march well ended. He is become a civil magistrate again,—it is a day of triumph — and at length he stands in Osca. Our strongest reason is usually placed farthest back and out of sight, as a buttress to the rest. Manlius wished that Vergilia should see him in his senatorian garments now for the first time. He wore the toga prætextata, the white robe edged with a broad band of scarlet. Except a slender wreath of olive leaves interwoven with myrtle, there was no covering on his head; nor on his feet, beside red or mullet-coloured sandals, secured about the ankles with purple thongs. All these little particulars had great significations. Much was meant by the mullet-coloured sandals, the purple thongs, and, above all, the broad band of scarlet. His almost naked head and feet were so well shaped, that they had been imitated by two artists from Corinth for a bust of Paris, and a statue of Achilles.

King Orcilis was skilled in such silent evasions as are necessary to high rank, when pressed upon by the encroachments of inferior dignity. It was, therefore, not to salute the quæstor, of whose

presence he had been thus indirectly informed, that he rose from his bench, but, by elevating his diminutive stature, and extending his slender neck, to distinguish more clearly his own legionary Oscans, now marching through the camp. Thus it happened that Manlius was so fortunate as to find the king upon his feet, and that Orcilis was ready to welcome the quæstor before his subjects in a position which exacted nothing arrogantly, and yielded nothing unroyally. Nor could Vergilia have received her lover in any other manner so appropriate as that which she preferred. She dropped her veil, and said not a word. Myrtilis, as an older acquaintance, might have said a great many words, notwithstanding the presence of her father. But other voices, also, beside those of the quæstor's attendants, announced that Sertorius was at hand, that the ensigns of his legions were distinguishable from the city gates. It had been arranged that the confederate monarch should meet his ally, and accompany him through the camp to the sacrifice. As Sertorius was on foot, he, too, would march in the same manner. Several of the Spanish princes and Oscan nobles now assemble in haste, a procession is formed, the spectators turn their faces, the nearest of them kneel; and Orcilis, supposing that the quæstor had

presented himself as his conductor, descends the steps. The quæstor has other intentions, and leaves him to more ambitious guides. A wave of the hand dismisses his attendants.

Myrtilis was eager to ask particulars of the victory from an eye-witness. She wished to learn first, whether Perpenna, whom it had rescued from Metellus, were a prætor by any better authority than his own appointment — how old he was — how rich — and if married. Seating the quæstor between her cousin and herself, she recommended that, as the prospect was gay and the portico shady, Vergilia should withdraw her veil.

MYRTILIS.

We have no flies here to-day ; they dine with Jupiter, and are reserving their appetites for the sacrifice. Manlius expects our congratulations on his escape from Pompeius, who, notwithstanding the heat of the weather, has taken great pains in his pursuit, and would have killed him if he had caught him. Of all the Roman generals on both sides, there is but one who has not run away from his enemies since the last new moon. They take it by turns to frighten and be frightened, and his turn will come the next. Yet why ? The prætor has longer legs, and is twenty years younger than

Metellus. Such a war may last many generations, and almost all the combatants die of old age. Vergilia was on the sea during this chase of the quæstor with his four legions from Lucentum; and she has wanted time, since her arrival at Osca, to hear much, or see any thing.

MANLIUS.

It requires but little time to hear much from such a companion. Let me assist in the correction of that which she hears now. Allowing that the quæstor fled from Pompeius and Muræna, Muræna and Pompeius fled from Sertorius and the quæstor.

MYRTILIS.

It is what I say. There has been a great race, during the hurry of which, both parties forgot to fight. Now wait till this thread be disentangled. The quæstor fled from two enemies, but they were not together. His chief glory is that he fled twice, or two different ways, and both times too fast for the speed of his pursuers. As so much activity and love of exercise promise him a long life, he may hope to enjoy many such triumphs. Lambs ten days old fight with one another in this manner. There is a little butting of heads, with

the understanding that if one will not yield, the other must.

MANLIUS.

Who else fled?

MYRTILIS.

Why, both of the proconsuls, and one of the prætors. Were the war less playful than it is, and less inconsistent with the gravity of the king my father, I would counsel him to take up arms and chase them all. Why not? The oldest of his ancestors was great-uncle to Mars.

MANLIUS.

Vergilia, who has long anticipated this wish to drive us out of Spain, will join in the recommendation.

VERGILIA.

If all our tyrants might be expelled together, what Spaniard would not? But to drive out only one half of them, might render the other half more secure, and therefore more imperious.

MANLIUS.

The half to which we belong did not come uninvited, nor has it remained here unemployed. Your hospitality was more gracious when it was less deserved.

VERGILIA.

Because, like some other guests, you have staid so long as to supplant the children of the house, and overrule the masters.

MANLIUS.

Then let the strangers and the inhabitants confound their titles, and live in it together. We offer such alliances as will unite the proprietorship. This proposal has happy examples for its recommendation in our history. Suppose Manlius to be the representative of Æneas, and, not Myrtilis, but her cousin, of Lavinia?

MYRTILIS.

Æneas was a runaway, indeed — but not a quæstor. Lavinia was the king's daughter, not his niece. Such alliances should begin according to the precedent, or of what use is it?

MANLIUS.

With Sertorius and Myrtilis?

MYRTILIS.

Sertorius will never marry, unless Juno should become a widow. But this other prætor, Perpenna, so far resembles Æneas, that he has been

cruelly beaten, and unappeasably frightened. What discipline can be better for a husband?

MANLIUS.

The worst evils of long absence have already been incurred by me — disputed honors, disappointed expectations, and alienated friends. Against her cousin's impatience and injustice, I confided in the aid of Myrtilis. How often have I lifted this faithless confederate to a seat on which she sat the most proudly — the shoulder of Sertorius. Every other plaything was forsaken for his helmet. Measuring by the standard of her own magnanimity, Vergilia thinks nothing unattainable which is great, and nothing great or noble which is cautious. Yet the parent who would provide for many children, may sometimes appear parsimonious to the most deserving of them. The protector of Spain would be unfaithful to her trust, if his prudence were exceeded by his partiality.

VERGILIA.

Of two protectors, Spain has preferred the feeblest. Since protection was so necessary, it might have been enjoyed under a less disgraceful guardianship. If the majesty of Rome be thus imperious, and destiny have conferred upon her

the universal sovereignty which she asserts, why should we render our obedience, not to her laws or their ministers, but to the refuse of her armies followed by her justice? Our submission to the Gods is a duty which need kindle no blush: when men demand it in their name, there is still their name for our apology, even if we be deceived. Surely this were less shameful than such voluntary subjection to a protector who will not protect — a shipwrecked fugitive, with his two broken galleys, affecting patronage over kings.

MANLIUS.

Accept my gratitude for so generous an attestation to the glory of Sertorius. He was, indeed, an exile, with no more than two galleys, and those broken by the tempests. The heavens themselves sided with his enemies against fortitude which neither could subdue. The last fragment of a ruined party, he was pursued by conquerors who had swept the earth from every other obstruction. Among all its regions, no more than one great name remained which men associated with fidelity. But even then, Spain honored it and trusted to it. She placed herself behind the shattered buckler of this shipwrecked fugitive, nobly preferring any hazard to voluntary

servitude. Eight or nine years ago, your first wish was for the safest hiding-place, till his arrival. To-day, he returns with victory over eight or nine veteran legions commanded by generals the most skilful of the Republic, and hitherto the most fortunate. The captain of these shipwrecked galleys has elevated Spain to a rivalry with Rome. Osca grows luxurious as Capua, and now that Vergilia is arrived, haughty as Carthage.

VERGILIA.

Trusting to the honor of such a protection, she may soon find herself not less safe than Lucentum, or happy than Setabis.

MYRTILIS.

I have more hope of seeing a battle bravely fought between two lovers, than between these prætors and proconsuls. They are younger, fiercer, and their quarrel, when they are tired of it, may be more pleasantly reconciled. Were I married to Perpenna, I should employ both his eyes, and half his lictors. Sertorius has no more than one eye, and now no more than six lictors; but he has full forty years, or I would have taken part in his defence. There were many grey hairs discernible upon his head, before I deserted my seat upon his shoulder.

MANLIUS.

Perpenna's eyes would hardly be enough for the pursuit of caprice so variable in its transformations : but to what purpose would you employ his lictors ?

MYRTILIS.

To the pursuit of Perpenna. Were there no one who could overtake him, he might run away from me, as well as Metellus. As soon as his hairs too had become grey, I would stop the lictors, and let him go.

MANLIUS.

There are some grey already ; but as they grow upon a lofty place unadorned by any other sign of wisdom, you should wish that they might multiply.

VERGILIA.

It could not have been his wisdom which led him hither. Like others, he will be rewarded economically for the aid he brings, till the balance of obligations between Sertorius and himself can be adjusted by Death.

MANLIUS.

Myrtilis reminds me that her cousin is reposing

after the fatigues of a long journey; and has heard but little since her arrival.

MYRTILIS.

Pompeius and Muræna have overtaken most of the quæstor's wits dropped behind him among the other impedimenta — or I would ask why did Perpenna bring his grey hairs to Spain at all? Why did he come accompanied by all these legions? Why offer his aid to Sertorius, if Sertorius must first help the helper? Perpenna is a senator, a prætor, a general followed by seven or eight legions — what else is he?

MANLIUS.

A patrician among the noblest of the Republic.

MYRTILIS.

Is he rich?

MANLIUS.

Every province in Italy contains some portion of his inheritance; and yet the much larger half lies at a greater distance. Twice has he aspired to the consulship: nor is this the first time that he has been followed by an army. That I may reply to so many questions in the same breath — his grey hairs are not numerous — he has still

the carelessness and audacity of youth. Knowledge flutters playfully about a retentive memory — and the disputatious confess that he is eloquent. During the furious conflicts of those mighty rivals by whom the world was divided, he seemed, even in his youth, no inconsiderable acquisition. Educated in scorn of popular pretensions, Sylla courted him, and the senate flattered him. He was pushed unlawfully into offices which he seemed studious to disgrace. There is one principle in which alone inconsistency never could be imputed to Perpenna — he will do nothing suggested by wiser men. Rather than follow their guidance, he will baffle his own wishes, he will thwart his own ambition. Because his friends, his interests, I may add his prejudices and sympathies, were on the part of Sylla, he sided finally with Marius. Because all his equals, clients, and partisans were of his own opinion, he changed it. The obvious course of honor seemed too direct for his preference. A quarrel was necessary, and he had nothing to resent. He would be elected consul before half the preparatory offices, which could qualify him as a candidate, had been discharged. Sylla laughed — sent him to Syracuse, as no longer safe in Rome; and thus associated him with the cause of Marius. Since then, he has

occupied public attention only in the intervals of great events. When there was most danger, he has appeared boldly in Rome: when there was none at all, he has taken shelter in the provinces. During the crisis of that conflict for which the world, with all its regions, was the prize — who had leisure to enquire about Perpenna? At the termination of it, he was more easily overlooked than many better men.

VERGILIA.

Cautious and timid as he is in the defence of an ally, Sertorius shows no small courage in the selection of his colleague.

MANLIUS.

Perpenna has not been selected by him.

MYRTILIS.

We have philosophers here already who so far resemble Perpenna, that they do nothing, if they can help it, against their will. Such is my own theory. I have been a disciple of this sect almost seventeen years. But who else than Sertorius invited Perpenna into Spain?

MANLIUS.

He came because he was not invited.

MYRTILIS.

Then are we the more obliged by his disregard of ceremony. Had I suspected only half of his accomplishments, I should have supplicated the king my father to hasten his advent by an especial embassy ; and have lost him by looking for him. At last we may hope to see one Roman very little like the rest. Sertorius has no other particularity than some colour in his cheeks, and a straight nose.

MANLIUS.

Perpenna's colour was never heightened by his blushes.

MYRTILIS.

Of what complexion is his wife ?

MANLIUS.

Which wife ?

MYRTILIS.

I hoped to hear that he had not one yet : but I mean the last.

MANLIUS.

He himself could hardly have told you that, without an effort of memory, and time for consideration. So liberal has he been with his divorces that in seven or eight years he has married seven or eight times, and almost always

to the rich. It is understood that his acquaintance with his wife draws near to its termination when they marry.

MYRTILIS.

Gold is less perishable than beauty ; so he keeps the gold, and lets the beauty go.

MANLIUS.

Your philosopher has founded what the Grecians call a school. The most studious of his disciples were Lentulus, Clodius, Catiline, Rufo, Umbrius, Cethegus, and, for a short time, Cæsar. But even honor wearies him. Among the older senators, some whose sons were more timid sectaries than these, indulged their curiosity as to the practical tendencies of his doctrine. For he sold not only his own estates, but the estates of other people. The first purchasers were surprised by subsequent claimants, and the second were mortified by the discovery that their bargains had been anticipated. He sold the patrimony of his enemies as well as his friends. Slaves, clients, freedmen, and even citizens, were included in such distant negotiations : large districts, Sicilian, Grecian, Asiatic, not visited even yet by the most adventurous of their new proprietors. After his

errors had been detected, the misapprehension was referred by him for settlement to those who were most concerned in it. At Rome he sold to twenty provincial candidates, offices of which other people had the disposal, and which had been filled already. All this time he borrowed in contempt of usury. He paid nothing, spent nothing; yet he lived, on that account, more royally than does Mithridates. Virtue so rare is seldom sheltered by its modesty from detraction; and such fortune cannot last. The senate became suspicious, inquisitive, tyrannical. Impatient under the arrows of obloquy which fell so thick upon his head, Perpenna removed his treasures to Cisalpine Gaul, assembled his clients and partisans, and proclaimed war as a successor to Marius persecuted by the patricians.

MYRTILIS.

Was he followed by his school?

MANLIUS.

Only by a part of it. Aufidius, Rufo, Umbrius, and Mæcenus are with him here. Italy still swarmed with the disbanded and discontented soldiers of both factions, who had forgotten, in their disappointments, all provocation to enmity

among themselves. Civil war had left the poorest not less indigent than before, and all its agents far more rapacious. The fugitives of Marius wanted bread, the partisans of Sylla demanded houses and estates. There was an equal provocation to plunder, a common dislike of peace, and a universal hatred against the tyranny which maintained order by punishment. His army soon amounted to six or seven legions, deficient in nothing beside discipline. Yet a residence on the southern side of the Alps was impossible. He crossed them, and struggled during the latter part of last year to establish himself among the Arverni and Rutini. Alas, the ungrateful barbarians there took up arms, that they might free themselves from their deliverer! Now he flies to the fugitive.

VERGILIA.

His humiliation is afflicting enough if he feel his misery as others do who have been constrained to shelter themselves in the same asylum. It may teach him wisdom.

MYRTILIS.

I hope not. We have had a great deal too much of such teaching and learning. Two wise people are more than enough, not only by half,

but by one and a half. Let us behold the new prætor as he used to be while he lived royally at the public expense.

MANLIUS.

So you shall. You shall behold him neither humble nor miserable, but in the constancy of the same fickleness, Perpenna still. Perhaps Vergilia may refuse her participation in such a preference for his magnanimity, when she learns that it was not Sertorius who abandoned Setabis and Lucentum, who provoked almost as many tears from her indignation as from her grief: it was Perpenna.

VERGILIA.

Perpenna was not yet in Spain.

MANLIUS.

Yet five months ago he had announced to Sertorius that he was advancing into Spain. He required assistance in his progress, and supplies on his arrival. Designs like these are ruined if they are divulged. Sertorius, with his accustomed secrecy, could have accomplished both. The march prepared for, and pointed out, was by the coast to Emporia, Terraco, Valentia, and finally, to Lucentum. He recommended this as

the direction which would prove most safe, most easy, and best calculated for the common advantage. He provided vessels of burden which could have accompanied it with supplies step by step, and his gallies commanded the sea. The prætor never distracts his lieutenants, when they are at a distance from him, with unnecessary communications. Till ten days ago, I was as unsuspicious of these arrangements as were yourselves. Premature intelligence generates false hopes; fatal if they should encourage us to the adoption of false measures, and unprofitable in any case. For the present, my task was confined to the defence of Lucentum: greatly more disastrous would have proved its ill-success, if we had waited for Perpenna there.

VERGILIA.

And what disturbed the arrangement which might have saved us?

MANLIUS.

The pride of Perpenna. If he had followed the instructions given to his messengers, and had advanced along the coast, his march might, indeed, have been intercepted by Metellus, it might have been retarded and obstructed; but with the mountains and ocean behind him, it could not have been

endangered. To accomplish this, Metellus must have left his camp defenceless and almost empty. He must have left it between Sertorius and himself, and nearest to Sertorius. Three armies would have been withdrawn from it: one commanded by Pompeius, one by Muræna, and his own. He must have risked all, and would have lost all. But my ill-success in conducting war, and in describing its operations, may be much alike. Perhaps it were safer to desist, than to provoke objections from a commentator so critical as Myrtilis. Is thus much intelligible?

MYRTILIS.

If Metellus had staid at home, he must have suffered Perpenna to pass by. If he had gone out to stop him, Sertorius would have profited by his absence, and robbed his house.

MANLIUS.

Well, and supposing that Perpenna had passed by, Pompeius and Muræna were not strong enough to contend with those two armies, which would have been united under Perpenna and Manlius. Metellus must either have recalled them from Lucentum, or have advanced to their assistance. If he had marched to their assistance

he must have lost his camp ; if he had recalled either Pompeius or Muræna, he must have abandoned Lucentum. The single resolution in which Perpenna never seems inconsistent, is to do nothing proposed or recommended by wiser men. It was by this coast road that he had himself determined to enter Spain ; but when Sertorius accommodated the plan to his own combinations, Perpenna would find or force a western passage through the Pyrenees, he would descend from them in front of Metellus, he would unite, not with Manlius at Lucentum, but with Sertorius at Osca. Most contemptuous was his indignation that he should be sent as the assistant to a quæstor.

Metellus could hardly credit the extent of his good fortune. He might now separate the two prætors, he could interpose between Perpenna and Sertorius, still keeping his camp near enough on one side of him, still leaving Muræna at Setabis, and Pompeius at Lucentum.

MYRTILIS.

We all supposed that the philosopher was lost among the mountains, and the quæstor upon the sea-shore.

MANLIUS.

Three days sooner or later, and there could

have been no escape for either. But Sertorius estimates the value of one day as adequate to great events. Had he moved earlier, his designs would have been betrayed; a few hours lost, and he would have arrived too late for the rescue, first of Manlius, and next of Perpenna. Dividing his army, he selected the lightest and swiftest cohorts from each legion, and dispatched them silently in that direction, by which, as Myrtilis tells us, his terrified quæstor was flying like a heron between two eagles, or a hare between two hounds, turning and doubling, first from the enemy on his right hand, then from that on his left, and protracting, hour by hour, his surrender to one of them. With the remainder of his forces, with all the hurry and tumult of an army preparing for battle, with numbers skilfully perplexed, and multiplied, and confounded that they might appear the greater, the prætor advanced in person toward Metellus. We now know that Metellus was so confident of victory, as to have collected more cooks, and prepared larger baths for the entertainment of Perpenna his guest and captive. At an easy distance from his camp, the jocular proconsul retained his position between two enemies, who could neither meet nor communicate, each weaker than himself. Perpenna's army, without supplies,

and exhausted by its march through the Pyrenees, must fight hopelessly, or yield disgracefully, or starve miserably. Nor was the old proconsul ignorant that Muræna and Pompeius were in chase of Manlius. "The war is at an end," said he; "of the enemy's three main armies, I have laid my hands on two."

Sertorius proposing no more active employment at present, for Statilius and the other generals who accompanied him, left them to spread and display their forces among the mountains behind Metellus. Then retiring unobserved, and concealing his absence even from his own army, he followed the cohorts which were on their march toward this flying quæstor. It was almost at the last hour that he joined them, and arrived. Yet was he in time to defeat Muræna, to drive back Pompeius, and to save the fugitives from Lucentum. Metellus supposed him to be close at hand. Those legions that he had left among the mountains saw his generals entering and leaving his pavilion, saw his secretaries with their tablets, and his messengers with their dispatches; nay, even now they believe that they saw himself, and not, as was the case, his helmet merely, and his cloak, while more than eighty miles lay between. Nor till this stationary half of the army had been

recalled and united to the other half, now crowned with victory, and augmented by the four additional legions under Manlius, did the veteran proconsul learn his error. He stirred himself at last to retrieve it. He defeated Perpenna again and again, forced him back upon the Pyrenees, assaulted his camp, and refused proposals for its surrender on the evening of the next day. His hand was, indeed, upon the neck of Perpenna. But every step in that direction had carried him so much farther from his camp, and every hour's delay was advancing Sertorius so much nearer to it. We had, as Myrtilis has told us, a great race, but it was followed by a great battle. Metellus won the race; and hardly had he entered within his intrenchments, when the armies of Sertorius and Perpenna were united, which next day won the battle. Pompeius and Muræna arrived too late to partake in it; but by their accession, we were weaker than the enemy, we were without supplies—it was time that the two prætors should retire. Leaving to Perpenna the easier and more accustomed road as far as Albula, where supplies had been provided, not for him, but for us, we returned westward among the mountains, by ways hitherto unexplored.

MYRTILIS.

Hark ! he comes !

MANLIUS.

Those shouts are from the legions. I see his eagles, and now, himself.

MYRTILIS.

Is that his helmet higher than the rest ?

MANLIUS.

Higher, and bare of leaves.

VERGILIA.

Such acclamations deafen me.

MANLIUS.

They are echoed from the city. O, that they could be heard across the ocean as far as Rome ! Myrtilis has lived nearer to Sertorius, and is become familiar with the cries of victory.

MYRTILIS.

Nevertheless, I feel frightened now. There are senators and augurs assembled about the altars.

MANLIUS.

The smoke from so many victims will soon

hide them. He who stands in crimson garments upon the steps, is Ahala the Pontifex Maximus. Now the legions halt. Their eagles are carried upon the tribunal. Sertorius himself ascends,—look, he stands alone,—he prepares to speak!

VERGILIA.

Even the city is hushed, as if, from so great a distance, it were possible to hear him. The silence awes me!

MYRTILIS.

Vergilia, those tears are an ill augury,—forbear to weep!

CHAPTER IX.

ARGUMENT.

Omens from Sympathy.—The Fawn's History resumed.—Her Caprice.—She refuses permission to escape;—and she escapes without leave.—Cruelty imputed to Sertorius by Vergilia.—The Slaughter of four thousand Slaves.—Manlius justifies it.—He describes the Prætor's former position between Marius and Sylla—and his present relationship to Perpenna.—Their Mothers related.—The Friendship of these Noble Ladies not hereditary;—but its Remembrances and Recommendations entitled to reverence.—Manlius forewarns Vergilia that Justice and Repentance will come at last.—He is less obsequious now at Osca, than formerly he was at Lucentum.—Vergilia discovers that she is a Princess only in name and by permission;—that the quæstor affects patronage;—that Manlius is at home, and that she is not.

IN a stationary encampment, as at Osca, the Prætorium, or General's Pavilion, was constructed of materials more costly and substantial than those used by the soldiers for their tents. It comprehended apartments for the “*imperatoris contubernales*,” or youths of noble birth serving under the prætor's immediate guardianship,—for the assemblage of civil and military officers,—for the prosecution of science and the accommodation of

its votaries,—for the librarii, the interpreters, the secretaries, ambassadors, messengers, freedmen, and often for the secret emissaries from Rome. Here, too, stood a temple, called the Augurale, in which were deposited the images of the Gods, the sacred vessels, the pontifical robes, and the standards of especial sanctity. The Prætorium was a palace slightly built, with sufficient room and stability for much decoration,—yet every where retaining the arrangements prescribed by custom, and the same external character of a great pavilion. The Quæstorium and Quintana were detached, and placed like wings on each side of it: but the part occupied by the prætor himself, and his personal attendants, was called the Tribunal, extending its name to that little grassy elevation in front whence justice could be publicly administered and, on extraordinary occasions, the army addressed. Such was the Prætorium, not at Osca alone, but if stationary, every where else.

Vergilia, like other people, had become less sceptical since she was unhappy. She shuddered, and her eyes were filled with tears. Myrtilis called this momentary horror an ill omen,—and Vergilia felt as if it were indeed such. But the silence of a great multitude may agitate those by whom it is unexpected, as powerfully as its accla-

mations. More hearts may beat, and tears fall, through sympathy with strong emotions when they are not expressed. There is expectation, and the mystery which has some relationship both to love and terror. One man suspends the breath of many thousands, who listen not less eagerly because it is impossible that they should hear. He is seen alone among the eagles of his legions, by the whole camp around him, the whole city above him, and by Vergilia for the first time.

In her childhood she had been taught to consider him so much greater than the deities, because their power was often neither beneficent nor equitable. Since then, she had striven to sharpen her hatred of him with the thoughts that her father's death was hastened by his abandonment,—her hereditary rights, and her country's independence were faithlessly betrayed. But now it is suggested that possibly there may have been no other injustice beside her own. She remembers that if her father were forsaken, the quæstor and the four legions under his command must have been endangered at the same time. Were these also hazarded unfaithfully and capriciously?

Sertorius could have uttered no more than the shortest congratulations of victory, when he was seen to stoop, and to raise some burden light as

a flower-basket, but otherwise undiscernible from so great a distance, than that a basket of silver would have had less lustre. He held it, for a moment, toward his legions, then compressed it in his bosom, and descended from the Tribunal. A cry, yet louder than before, burst from the armed spectators, who immediately dispersed.

MYRTILIS.

What is it that he stooped for? Behold, he presents it to his soldiers! And now, it is carried by him into the Prætorium.

MANLIUS.

She is found then!

MYRTILIS.

What has he found?

MANLIUS.

I should have said that she has been recovered. A gift from Diana to the Chaste,—or from Destiny to the Fortunate. A plaything in the room of Myrtilis, — less fair, indeed, — but also less wild, capricious, and unfaithful. Yet, at my departure from the prætor, she, too, had deserted him!

MYRTILIS.

I am grown jealous already ! This old prætor is at least as brave as the new one, — and more honest. I will repent and retract. What is this gift ?

MANLIUS.

A fawn. The Goddess must have caught it and tamed it. Her own eyes are not more serene than those of the gentle beast ; nor is her own bosom more fair. As for the rest, it was presented to him yesterday, and lost by him last night.

MYRTILIS.

The prætor has lions, panthers, eagles, ostriches, — Diana's gift must be transferred to me. I will ask him for this fawn.

MANLIUS.

He would refuse it to Minerva, at the risk of her displeasure in the next great battle. Myrtilis may despise him or disclaim him, — yet never is she forgotten by him. Two Numidian steeds, the swiftest and gentlest of their country, are in training for her chariot, — but the fawn is sacred.

VERGILIA.

These Oscan lovers of holy days remember that

the usual termination to a spectacle is a feast, and they are departing in search of one. We shall be left alone.

MYRTILIS.

Let us do the same as they. We sit in a large theatre, which will soon be void above and below. The actors are concealing themselves behind their scenes, and the audience withdraws.

MANLIUS.

The king, on his return, will look for us here. A much greater traveller than I have been, might remember no other theatre more magnificent than this, whether filled or empty.

MYRTILIS.

I would rather look at the fawn. Her history might detain us. She was a gift — who brought it? Mercury, or Pan, or one of the goddess's own Nymphs?

MANLIUS.

Pan, or a messenger borrowed from his attendants more clumsy still. You have heard that the road by which Sertorius would have returned was relinquished to Perpenna, who encamps at Ausula. Another was discovered for ourselves among

forests and precipices, long valleys winding between mountains, and solitudes so entangled and perplexed, that even their inhabitants might confound them. Returning with a double victory and the gaiety of success, the prætor, according to his custom, marched before the legions. At the moment when this fawn was presented to him, his thoughts were occupied by myself. Resting one hand on the mane of my horse, he laughed playfully at its rider's impatience, and the tardy pace to which his eagerness was restricted. "The quæstor shall be released at daybreak tomorrow," said he, "and precede the army, that he may prepare for its reception. Love is happiest in the companionship of glory, though he may blush the more. Vergilia is at Osca. Other people will tell her how large a part was contributed by Manlius to the victory: she shall hear from me that the whole of it merited less honor than his retreat." The words were interrupted by a peasant, breathless and speechless through haste, who thrust himself between the prætor and his lictors, bearing some gift muffled in a cloak. Prepared for outcries against oppression, so common on a march and which he never disregards, Sertorius removed his suppliant to one side, that the legions behind him might suffer no delay. The bewildered peasant

professed to be ignorant of the burden which he carried — the gift which he presented. Only some few minutes before, it had been entrusted to his care by a huntress, on one of whose naked shoulders was her quiver, and who rested one hand on her bow unbent. Above her head shone the new moon; the cloak which he brought with so much eagerness lay at her feet. “Haste with this,” she said, “to Sertorius.” Sertorius raised the cloak, and behold a gift not unworthy of the goddess! She herself can hardly have a shape more delicate: her image in the augurale which was sent to the prætor from Epidaurus, is not so fair.

VERGILIA.

The peasant hoped to find greater simplicity in his hearers than they have found in him. Such a huntress may be seen in twenty temples: but this quiver never rattled in the forest, nor do new moons like this ever rise there.

MANLIUS.

Sertorius, too, remarked that such a description of the goddess must have been learnt elsewhere. When their wits are illuminated by rays reflected from silver, the most artless of the simple grow skilful in little wiles. But by what prescience

did the peasant discover our approach? The return of Sertorius through these solitudes was undesigned three days before even by himself. What leisure was there in which to prepare his fawn for a new master? Impatient of the light, and terrified by every other spectator, she extricated herself from the peasant's cloak, that she might leap into the prætor's bosom. Even yet she endures the approach of no other person than Sertorius. Only in his arms, or by his side, is she at peace. How could the shepherd have taught her to love and trust one man out of such multitudes, at first sight? She manifested no attachment to himself. She abhors the caresses of the prætor's attendants. Pity my mortification while I confess that she distinguishes me by extraordinary terror and dislike. No attempt at conciliation, however cautious, has the slightest success. Even Vergilia is hardly so cold, or Myrtilis so hostile.

VERGILIA.

I will not dispute the superior discernment of this fawn. The augurs tell us that their own wisdom is more fallible than the instinct of crows and pullets. Her sagacity may extend farther than that of either myself or Myrtilis.

MANLIUS.

It is cruel that I should be required to furnish comparisons in favour of an enemy, and advance the credit of this fawn at the expense of my own. An oracle so often consulted by Myrtilis will command respect. Panula was present — her own chief counsellor and her father's. Panula, the Ulysses of the city and the camp: in war and peace every one reverences the responses of Panula. Occupied by other cares, and bewildered among that endless labyrinth of forests, precipices, valleys, and mountains, he did not recognise, till then, the cliffs above our heads, from which this shepherd had descended. At length he exclaims "they conceal a shrine so sacred that, of us men, none may approach it beside the innocent; even the eternal Gods tremble while they draw near to it. Its worshippers must have pure hands, pious lips, and chaste bosoms. Were the fawn mine, I would refuse to exchange her for such another victory." We afterwards learnt that the sanctity of these rocks had been better remembered by others. Many Spaniards, who preceded us through the valley, had removed the garlands from their helmets, whispering caution to their companions, and passing under them reverentially with averted

eyes. Ensigns were lowered, the flowers and branches detached from them, and other similar emblems of triumph laid aside, that their bearers might propitiate the dreadful goddess whose oracles were so near.

VERGILIA.

What goddess is she?

MANLIUS.

Half of the mystery is in her name, which, if revealed, might betray the other half. Some would not utter it, if they could. Some lessen their audacity by confounding, or concealing it among many other names. These last call her Cybele, Berecynthia, Fauna, the Infernal Diana, Hecate Tergemina, Triforma Proserpina, the Mother, or, the Mistress of the Gods, Universal Fate, Immutable and Inscrutable Destiny. But we will descend from these clouds to the twilight of Nature. There was no difficulty in retaining the fawn's companionship while we left her unconfined. During the remainder of our march yesterday, she walked step by step with her protector; she followed him even among the ranks; she manifested little other fear than that she might be separated from him. But the restraint which had been previously attempted, was unendurable.

It terrified her to despair. A creature so delicate must have destroyed life in her efforts to escape from the slender chain by which, at first, the servants of Sertorius would have secured and conducted her. To have retained her longer by such violence would have been impossible, if it had been tried. Her struggles were frantic. Pitying her terror, Sertorius commanded that the spectators should stand on one side, gave a free passage for flight to the mountains, and with his own hands released the chain. The gentle beast did, indeed, hide herself; but it was, once more, from so many eyes and tongues, in her master's bosom. Henceforth there could be no distrust on either side. At sunset, she accompanied him into his tent unconstrained. The lights which were kindled there, the concourse of expectants and attendants, the hurry of his servants, the confusion of so many voices approaching and departing, drove her no farther than to the darkest recesses where she might lie best concealed. Abhorring meat and drink from any other hand, she ate of the bread, and drank of the water which were presented by her master's.

But during those hours of refreshment preparatory to sleep, a general may have more cares than while he is marching before his army at mid-day.

Our thoughts were occupied otherwise than with the fawn when she reminded us of her presence by starting suddenly on her feet, erecting her little head as if she were listening to a call, and bounding from the tent. Even in the dark, she was betrayed by her skin's lustre. To stop, or overtake her, would have been impossible, but Sertorius followed that, by restraining the sentinels, he might repress violence. Hardly could a dart or an arrow have pursued the fugitive with speed greater than her own. Our interposition seemed as needless as to have assisted in the escape of a moonbeam. I wish that I could have ended my narrative without the additional discredit of one more prodigy. The camp abounds with dogs. Some followed her, some met her, but not one ventured near enough to harm her. The most ferocious turned aside, or slunk back again.

VERGILIA.

There is a wonder that still must remain questionable even by the credulous, who rejoice in this. We smile at such tenderness toward a beast. Shall we disbelieve, or can we dismiss from our remembrance, the slaughter of those four thousand slaves, who perished by the prætor's command, in their own camp?

MYRTILIS.

I disbelieve it. All other enemies of Sertorius, beside Vergilia, confess that he is godlike, not only in his beneficence, but his clemency.

VERGILIA.

Who, among his friends, denies that, when policy recommends them, he is no less terrible in his severities? I too believe that he rewards munificently, and that, whether patiently or contemptuously, he still forbears. Such virtues have their recompense in a good name. They ripen late fruit for which wisdom is content to wait. It is not his providence that I would question, but his humanity.

MYRTILIS.

The same person may be cruel and compassionate, when there is time enough for the change. We can love and hate; love to-day in proportion as we have hated yesterday. Half an hour is sufficient in my own case.

VERGILIA.

If so, Sertorius suffers no injury when we suppose that he may be constant at one season, and faithless at another.

MANLIUS.

I disbelieve both the policy and the cruelty : nor will I accept a concession to the honor of Sertorius at such a price. I believe that the same man who is merciful, gentle, gracious, and beneficent, may, even at the same time, be just and terrible in his justice. He must, indeed, be so great a man that the two extremities of human virtue shall find space enough for their reception in one bosom. Our nature has wings wider apart, when they are expanded, than those of the deities. This surely cannot seem incredible to Vergilia, who is always so tender in her compassion, and often so pitiless in her displeasure.

VERGILIA.

Is the reported slaughter then untrue ?

MANLIUS.

Sertorius slew more than four thousand ; but these slaves were then soldiers. They had been armed by C. Marius, and never has light shone on atrocities so hideous as theirs. He slew more than four thousand criminals whom it was impossible to reclaim or repress by any other means. He seemed an ill politician then : he weakened his party, he offended his general, he broke and

threw away the instruments of his success; but he vindicated humanity outraged and blasted, as it was, by more than four thousand crimes. The perpetrators had arms in their grasp, they were become soldiers instead of slaves, or rather gladiators and sicarii instead of soldiers. Yes, Sertorius can be terrible, but not cruel.

MYRTILIS.

By exterminating the wolves and the foxes he protects the lambs and the fawns. It seems that through this example, he avenged the innocent, he saved the helpless, and did some part of what I would have done myself. If they had been three times as many, I would have slain them all, and C. Marius too.

VERGILIA.

When Sertorius ranged himself on the side of Marius, was it through pity for the defenceless, or what else?

MANLIUS.

The liberty of Rome. The welfare of the Republic. Ferocious as he was, Marius happened to have justice for his cause, and the people for his clients. He never ventured to avenge this slaughter, nor outwardly to resent it. There was

one eye before which he quailed, and no more than one.

MYRTILIS.

As the other had been lost in his service, it seems but reasonable that the survivor should command respect. I never heard why it was that Sertorius endured buffets for Marius or from Sylla. He was the greatest of the three.

MANLIUS.

But he was, by much, the youngest of the three. The ladder which reaches to supremacy has many steps; if good fortune is not the first of them, it must be the last. Standing on the earth, it can be mounted only by the patient sequence of its degrees, and by reserving all our strength and agility for a spring where one is missing. Even this Perpenna had more clients, greater riches, loftier nobility, craftier partisans.

MYRTILIS.

Then Sertorius should not have thrown aside the superiority acquired for him by his victories. He, too, now is no more than a prætor. He relinquished six out of his twelve lictors, that he might descend in official dignity to the same level with Perpenna, who still affects such civil

superiority as you have described. The change was displeasing both to the king my father, and myself. By dismissing these six lictors, he has renounced the proconsulship which accompanied him into Spain, and he has yielded a title above his own to Metellus and Pompeius.

MANLIUS.

At last we are of the same opinion. This is an error in policy, a concession which will be ungratefully repaid. Perpenna, who has twice vainly aspired to the consulship, is no more than a prætor still. Nay, even his prætorship is a fraud, for it was given neither in Rome nor at Osca. The proconsulship of Sertorius had been confirmed by one senate, and renewed by another. He held his honors at first by the same title as that by which Metellus held his, and afterwards by a better. Seven times has he been saluted *imperator*, on the field of battle, after seven great victories. Perpenna, whose camp was so recently besieged, and who treated with Metellus for its surrender on the evening of the next day, will suffer no inequality. There must be either two prætors or two proconsuls. Sertorius supposes that less ridicule will be provoked by dismissing six lictors of his own, than by conferring twelve

on Perpenna, and consents to place himself on the same level with his colleague.

VERGILIA.

Is it false, then, that the two prætors are of the same family?

MANLIUS.

Their mothers were related; but even these were not of the same blood. They were educated together, and were more than sisters in affection. We Romans love ardently; but let me confess that, among the descendants of Romulus, friendship is less common in our sex than in yours.

MYRTILIS.

Romulus himself was not so tender-hearted as the wolf that nursed him; he killed what she pitied.

MANLIUS.

A succession to thirteen hundred talents tranquilised Perpenna at the loss of his mother. Universal supremacy would afford but painful compensation, if the same calamity should happen to Sertorius. Never has there been less resemblance between any other men, than you will find between the children of those mothers who loved so much, and were so much alike. But

you will also find that, if Sertorius can transmit no part of Rhæa's friendship to Perpenna, he will endure from his colleague, for her sake, every thing which is not criminal in itself, or dangerous to the community.

VERGILIA.

She lives long enough to witness his glory !

MANLIUS.

Ay, and to exact obedience from his affection. Even in Rome she lives honored on his account ; for implacable as are our enmities, they seldom strike higher than their object, or farther back. Less happy is she in the glory of her son than in his tenderness. “ Other women have borne conquerors,” she says ; “ but what other mother has had such a child ? ” This shipwrecked fugitive is remembered in the Capitol, and great men hope to see his image there, if not himself. This slaughterer of the slaves, so terrible in his ambition, has offered after every victory to deposit his fasces, to relinquish his dignity, to depart from Spain, to live in Rome as a private citizen with his mother ; stipulating for nothing more by way of equivalent than your freedom, and the customary indemnification to us his friends. He is

not in arms against his country. We are neither rebels nor apostates. Spain chose Sertorius for her defender while the same usurpation which had trampled upon the liberty of Rome was marching against herself. We have brought hither with us the laws of our country, and the best of her citizens, the approbation of the gods, and the eagles of victory. We have brought them to an abode where tyranny follows us without even the pretence that it is just. How strange that Vergilia should now take part with the oppressor ! Others honor Sertorius, if she will not. They know that his affections are stronger than his ambition ; that he values this mother higher than glory ; and that the loss of empire would afflict him less than her reproach. I am consoled by the belief that justice and repentance will come at last.

VERGILIA.

You have forgotten, but does Sertorius also forget, that there are other children who have loved their parents, and who thus far differ from himself, that they shall be restored to them no more ? If so, he too is unjust. He still hopes to revisit Rome, where he is expected by his mother. There is now no father in Lucentum who waits for me.

MANLIUS.

Even when it is not sanctified by virtue he reverences grief. At present he approaches as its suppliant, entreating first patience, and next reconciliation. I am commissioned not to demand repentance, but to propose peace.

VERGILIA.

Who told him that peace had been disturbed?

MANLIUS.

I did.

VERGILIA.

Has he learnt from you that there was need of reconciliation?

MANLIUS.

From me, and long ago.

MYRTILIS.

The quæstor partakes in my privilege of telling the truth as often as he pleases, and no oftener. Of what possible use is a secret if we may not reveal it? How otherwise can we make known our reputation for fidelity, or prove that we have been esteemed deserving of confidence? Who would care for a zone of pearls if she must wear

it only in bed? This secret was brought to Lucentum six months ago.

VERGILIA.

What secret?

MYRTILIS.

That Manlius is in love with Vergilia, and Vergilia with Manlius.

MANLIUS.

Who brought it?

MYRTILIS.

Panula, the oracle. He, as he said, learnt it from Manlius the quæstor. Every one reverences the oracles of Panula. This oracle of camp and city, of war and peace, selected me for its prophetess. No more than one double restriction did he impose upon me. Never was I to betray either the revelation or the deity. Six months' silence may be sufficient to show Panula that I can hold my peace.

MANLIUS.

How much longer in your own case?

MYRTILIS.

As often as I am in love myself, I entrust the

secret first to the person who is the most interested, and next to the king my father. One of them is sure to shake his head — now and then the other does.

MANLIUS.

Well, the temple of Concord is before us, and we are half-way up the steps. I alone have complained of Vergilia's injustice: the prætor, who has suffered from it, laments it, and excuses it. He sends me before him to extinguish enmity. Such was the subject of his discourse yesterday, while one hand rested on my horse's mane, till we were interrupted by this Fawn.

Vergilia averted her face: the change of attitude was accounted for by occasional novelties in the camp below. Whether speaking or listening, Myrtilis seldom continued in one posture till the words had ceased. Seated between the two, Manlius supposed that there was restlessness from the same cause in both. But he would have felt as happy in the hands of Pompeius or Muræna, as upon that bench, if the countenance which was turned away from him had been exposed. So then — the love which, at Lucentum, was permitted through gratitude — a tolerated, a bashful, a reverential love, waiting for happier hours and

distant opportunities, had proclaimed its expectations to Panula, six months ago! Sertorius, conversing gaily with his quæstor, had sent him to demand its dues! This heiress of Setabis and Lucentum had lost more than her father, or her inheritance, or her country! Who at Osca trembles when she is displeased? Who now watches to prevent or to propitiate her resentment? Not her lover; he is at his ease! On his own ground, there is a loftier air, the consciousness of desert. A Roman senator repeats playfully, heedlessly, boastfully, that "Love is happiest in the companionship of glory." And faith has been betrayed; the resentments of a young barbarian are laughed at by the prætor for their simplicity, and excused, because Manlius is their patron or apologist, notwithstanding their insolence! In the same moment that the mortified princess might have retracted her displeasure against Sertorius, she learns that it is made known to him. He was called by her a fugitive who had escaped from his country with two gallies. Not till Manlius had echoed her words again and again, did she remember that there was another fugitive who had thus escaped with two gallies provided for her by Sertorius.

CHAPTER X.

ARGUMENT.

A Passage or Grotto communicating between the City and the Camp. — How it happens that our Fancy strays the farthest and widest, when it is the most carefully directed. — How that so little Resemblance should be found between what we have been told of a Man, and what we see. — A shorter Colloquy, including Sertorius and Orcilis. — Manlius adds to the Displeasure which he had provoked. — Additional Adventures of the Fawn; — and the First Part of her History concluded.

THE camp and the city were so near to each other, that an archer, shooting his arrow from the walls, might almost have reached the tents. They were separated only by a precipice of sixty or seventy cubits. The ordinary communication between them was through their gates at either end. But by this road the prætorium of Sertorius was far remote from the palace of Orcilis, though standing immediately below it.

That they might reach the pastures, the river, the olive groves, and the country beyond, without a daily exposure in the public streets, the ancestors of Orcilis had created, for their personal con-

venience, a shorter passage by perforating the rock. There are now few other remains of ancient Osca — Osca among the mountains, by which its site can be so certainly ascertained. The highest end of this steep and narrow grotto commenced in the palace court, or, as it is called architecturally, the *cavum ædium*: its lowest end was almost opposite to the prætorium. Both were well guarded by their respective nations, and strongly secured by iron gates.

The excavation is still a long and straight gallery steeply inclined, and faintly lighted at each extremity. It then afforded a ready communication between the king and the prætor, which they reserved for their private use. It reduced the distance almost as much as the arrow's flight would have reduced it; and it facilitated their friendship by rendering social intercourse more private, and political intelligence more speedy.

The morning's solemnity was at an end. While Orcilis received and congratulated his Oscan generals in the prætorium, some few minutes spent in the bath restored to Sertorius that colour which Myrtilis had described, fresh as before two great combats and a ten days' march. Superstition required that the paludimentum, a robe of

purple gorgeously interwoven with gold, should be worn by him during some few minutes when leaving the camp for battle, and returning to it with victory. But he now resumes a dress simple and appropriate to daily use, though sufficient for distinction. His helmet is as light as could be fabricated from burnished steel, blue, or almost black, and bearing on its crest neither leaf nor plume. The breastplate is crossed by its belt of crimson, a scarf sustaining the sword, and denoting the prætorship. Between the zone and the knees are skirts studded with silver scales. These scales are set in perpendicular lines so close to each other, that neither a javelin's point, nor an arrow's barb could penetrate beyond them. Boots, scaled in the same manner, reached more than half-way up the legs.

It was expected that the king's return would be attended by ceremonies similar to those of his departure. But as both he and the prætor were desirous of an escape from any additional congratulations, Orcilis dismissed his nobles and Sertorius his lictors. Ascending by this dim passage, they reached the palace and the portico while Myrtilis, for the tenth time, had resumed, and refused to resume, her seat. Never before did she continue so long in the

same place. Vergilia felt still more eager to depart, that she might suppress or conceal her indignation against the quæstor. Though unsuspecting of the displeasure which he had caused, Manlius was constrained at last to look abroad for his attendants. At that moment, the palace gates were thrown open behind them, and the allies appeared.

We seldom find that our imaginations have derived much accuracy from report, however honest or circumstantial it may be. The more elaborate are such representations, the greater activity of fancy do they awaken in adding and embellishing, often in changing and misrepresenting. That among a hundred patricians, Sertorius would have been known by her as the prætor, Vergilia still believed; yet the age seemed less than could be reconciled with glory of twenty years' growth. There were, indeed, the bulk and solidity of middle life — the broad chest, the sedate front, and where the helmet pressed upon his temples, some grey hairs. But the activity of his form seemed light as ever, and the healthy cheerfulness of his countenance was youthful still. Twenty years ago, he had been known only as the hardiest soldier of the republic. At that time, while a tempest of darts and arrows whitened the waters about his

head, he swam the Rhone where its vortexes were the deepest ; bearing with him all his arms, as well as seven or eight wounds. Nor less qualified for a similar exploit does he appear at present. During almost nine years spent in Spain, he had struggled first for liberty, and next for empire. The scars of mighty passions might have been looked for upon a brow against which all her lightnings had been hurled by Rome. Vergilia expected statelier gravity — the haughty and imperious will which neither good fortune could seduce, nor evil fortune could discourage — contempt well concealed — superiority always exercised, but never claimed.

She saw instead the countenance of such a man as children run to, dogs climb upon, strangers make room for, and the ignorant traveller, as he passes by, turns round and watches till he is out of sight — such as young maids smile at without blushing, scrupulous neighbours consult without pledging or cautioning — the perplexed follow for guidance and assistance, the unhappy for consolation and redress. It was the face of a sportsman foremost and skilfullest in the forest — of a guest gayest and kindest at the table — of the bravest soldier in the battle, and the promptest counsellor in the senate-house. It explained in one moment

the petulance of Myrtilis and the confidence of the fawn.

Vergilia was prepared for the courtesy of high birth. Generosity was among the prætor's chief attributes. No doubt, the arrogance of a conqueror would be suppressed in one so familiar with victory. She looked for habitual dignity in a patrician, and unostentatious authority from a proconsul. Manlius, indeed, had discovered something more than a sufficient consciousness of his deserts. Standing on his own ground, and sustained there by the friendship of Sertorius, he was become lofty and confident. But the prætor enjoyed longer experience in the arts by which power may exact its dues, without exhibiting its insolence. No doubt, toward the orphan niece of Orcilis there would be kindness, if not deference, in his patronage; and his condescension would be generous if not refined. All these coarse lines and colours with which imagination had painted the portrait of Roman despotism dispersed at the first glance. The prætor embraced Myrtilis as if Orcilis had been her grandfather, and he her father. A smile, so rarely seen on the king's countenance, perfected the illusion. It welcomed Sertorius, not to the house of an ally, but to his own family.

Manlius, when humblest at Lucentum, had never approached Vergilia more reverentially — nor did the king, affectionate as he was, receive her at Osca with greater tenderness. “He had long since been taught to honor piety and constancy in one whom he was so ill able to assist.” A few words were added to mark the difference of age rather than of condition; and yet, as if these few were too many, he changed them for congratulations addressed to Myrtilis whose good fortune till now was incomplete.

MANLIUS.

Myrtilis is prepared to repay the congratulations which we present with others not less significant of her friendship for us. She rejoices that the quæstor outran Pompeius and Muræna, who would have killed him if they had caught him. She feels pleased that the prætor is in still less danger of being overtaken by Metellus whose legs are not so long. All the Roman generals, she says, take it by turns to frighten and be frightened. Such wars may continue during many generations, and the combatants be renovated by air and exercise till they die of old age. Lambs and kids contend with one another in this manner. There is some little butting of heads; and if one will not yield, the other must.

SERTORIUS.

I wish that Myrtilis, under Minerva's tuition, would perfect the art of war, by teaching us how to win battles without fighting at all.

MANLIUS.

The princess has no such design. On the contrary, she wishes for wars more bloody, and generals more terrible. Had the opportunity been presented to her twenty years ago, she would have slain friends as well as enemies — Marius as well as Sylla. Even now, if it were less inconsistent with the majesty of the king her father, she would counsel him to take up arms, and chase us all.

SERTORIUS.

Where did Myrtilis learn such cruelty?

ORCILIS.

She has spent some time lately in the contemplation of ages more heroic than ours. The same Greek has given his instructions both to her brothers and herself. She learns readily every thing else beside prudence and moderation, which should have been the first acquired, as foundations to the rest.

MYRTILIS.

I reserve them for the summit. Prudence and moderation are safe covering to lighter matters, and may roof in the stores below. From the history of this Greek's countrymen, we learn that one king formerly was equivalent to a hundred prætors or proconsuls now. Achilles was a king who could fight better without an army than Sertorius can with one. His legions had little other employment than to witness what he did. Ajax was a king. Had he retreated from Lucentum, he would have brought with him the arms of Pompeius, or the dead body of Muræna.

SERTORIUS.

We are satisfied to return unencumbered by such burdens. But there is great butting of heads, and some running away, in the history to which Myrtilis refers. I hope that both the princesses are not thus hostile to us; or if so, that the king will prefer less sanguinary counselors.

MANLIUS.

Myrtilis is so much more tolerant than her cousin, that I have been glad to accept her mediation. She has not accused us of treachery and

tyranny, as well as cowardice. We run away from our enemies; but she does not say that we have deceived and deserted our allies.

SERTORIUS.

Myrtilis has had less reason than her cousin to think so. I can better endure the first imputation than the last. Painful as is the encounter of such infamy, to repel it would be vain, to transfer it contemptible.

MYRTILIS.

Where is this fawn?

SERTORIUS.

In the Augurale, asleep.

MYRTILIS.

I feel more eager to see the fawn than Perpenna. She is the gentler beast, though not so timid.

SERTORIUS.

Released from my bosom, she lay down there at the feet of Diana's statue, and fell asleep. But by what means did you learn that she had returned to me? Manlius could have related no more of her adventures than that she was lost.

MANLIUS.

By the same luminous whiteness which was visible when she escaped from us last night, I recognised her on the tribunal. She was raised from the ground, and presented by you to the soldiers?

MYRTILIS.

We are more curious to learn by what means so shy and so swift a creature was caught and brought back again, than how it happens that a white fawn should have been seen at night farther off than a fawn which is not white, or that a fawn of any colour when she is frightened, should run away. There is no particularity in this last. All the generals from Rome, proconsuls, prætors, proprætors, quæstors, legati, are old stags of the same herd.

ORCILIS.

Since we must wait patiently till this child has gained wisdom, I wish that Vergilia would fill up the interval by imparting a portion of her own silence.

MYRTILIS.

The quæstor has taught wisdom to both of us — thrifty wisdom, by which we may grow rich without toil. He has explained the philosophy

of Perpenna before his school had transferred itself to Spain. We have fathomed already many economical mysteries both about money and marriage.

SERTORIUS.

Leaving these, let the two philosophers dispute about my fawn. I have little time for wonder, and excepting, as a listener, no pleasure in argument. But connected with her, there are both truths and mysteries unexplained.

MYRTILIS.

The fawn came wrapped in a shepherd's cloak, and you believe that Diana sent it?

SERTORIUS.

I accept a gift, whether sent to me by the deity, or whether it came to me from some other quarter recommended by her name. Those whose wisdom is insufficient to detect fraud, may at least forbear from the publication of their credulity. Such is my case at present.

MYRTILIS.

What is it that we should explain?

SERTORIUS.

I must prepare you for the argument with a

history known even to Manlius only in part. You have not yet learnt from him that our success at the camp of Metellus, the victory on which we have received such humiliating congratulations, was clouded last night by rumours too probable for disbelief. Licinius Capito had been defeated by Valerius. Cæsada, destitute of supplies — Cæsada, otherwise so strong, so populous, and so opulent, was endangered. Capito had suffered himself to be surprised; three cohorts had laid down their arms, and his little army was dispersed. I would have suppressed the report till our arrival at Osca: if possible, I would have retarded it one day longer still. It fell like a hail-storm upon the laurels of those legions from which the three cohorts had been detached, and it chilled us all. But as it was followed by some of the fugitives, there could be no concealment. Manlius has said nothing of this. It was not my wish that he should carry with him to Osca such ill tidings. He came first to extenuate their importance when they could be no longer concealed. Thus much, if at liberty to do so, he might have disclosed: of the rest, he is not less ignorant than yourselves.

He left me at an hour too late for rest: yet, when least desired, sleep came. I dreamed that

we were again on our march, and that we had arrived almost at the city gates. Methought the ensigns had been despoiled of their flowers, the soldiers of their chaplets; all the symbols of victory had disappeared. We advanced heavily and mournfully, as if we, too, had been fugitives from Cæsada. There is a distinctness of apprehension in sleep, and a lively discernment of little particulars, more industriously acute than at any other time. I seemed to stand at that point where the main road separates, one branch ascending from it to the city, the other diverging to the camp. The colour of the skies, the lights and shadows on the walls, the crowd collected at the gates, the king with his attendants advancing from them to meet me, were noticed with a perception intense and active in the extreme. While waiting for the descent of my ally, and oppressed by this burdensome communication, loud cries arose from the legions behind me, shouts of triumph, the clashing and ringing of arms; and, looking back, I saw Furius the centurion spurring his horse among the ranks, and demanding a passage, that he might approach me. His helmet was covered with leaves; he waved a laurel branch in his hand, and, careless of the confusion he created, he exclaimed, "Victory from Cæsada!" Vergilia

smiles. She thinks that the philosophy of Myrtilis has sounding-line enough for a mystery like this, and that she may withhold her own.

VERGILIA.

Myrtilis will interpret such dreams without consulting the augurs, or applying to me.

MYRTILIS.

Some of mine would perplex, not only them and their birds, but the pontifex maximus himself. They are not less strange than that a prætor should see centurions in his sleep, and hear acclamations of victory. Perpenna dreams that he is pursued by his creditors, by his wives, by Metellus. What did this other prætor see when his eyes were open?

SERTORIUS.

His fawn! The fugitive had returned to him! He saw her standing by his couch, her head ornamented with flowers, such as are emblems of joy and victory. The slender neck also, which seemed elevated with pride, was wreathed in the same manner. Only the Graces could have decorated either so elegantly. Her return had been witnessed, not merely by the excubiæ

beyond the camp, and by the guards within it, but by other early-risers beside. Swift as at her departure, she bounded lightly over the agger and vallum, traversed the camp, and rushed into the prætorium. A few moments only were allowed for our caresses. The trumpets sounded preparatory to the march, the tribunes and legates assembled for their instructions. Carrying the fawn into the midst of them, and pointing to the coronet on her head, I promised that our losses at Cæsada should be repaired. They suggested that similar hopes and encouragements might be extended to the soldiers. I placed myself at the trench, holding the fawn in my bosom, and as they passed before me I presented her to them all.

Again I see the same smile, and would learn from our philosophers their interpretation of it. Perhaps, like others of the wise, they will disagree. If their confederacy should be broken through, I might escape between them.

VERGILIA.

No great hazard is incurred by a prediction which allows as much leisure as we please for its fulfilment. The fawn's chaplet will be fresh and green enough for remembrance twelve months hence.

MYRTILIS.

We disagree; for I determine otherwise. It is with Cæsada that his soldiers will associate the prætor's promise, and the fawn's coronet. They will expect revenge; not upon Metellus or Pompeius, twelve months hence, but upon Valerius now. Their disappointment will end in discontent; they will wag their heads at the prætor, and their tongues at the Fawn.

SERTORIUS.

At length this question, the seeds of which were sown by Destiny, has been winnowed by Vergilia, and ground by Myrtilis, each in her own way; yet is it indigestible as ever. The second part of my history is no dream. The king stands here as a witness wide awake. Yet so perfectly alike are the dream and the event foreshadowed by it, that the same words will describe them both. We ended our march two or three hours ago. We approached the city and the camp. Halting at that point where the road parts, and whence there is a branch to each, we waited, as had been predetermined, for the king. Looking up, I saw the same colours in the skies, the same lights upon the walls, the

same crowd collected before the gates, and the king issuing from them with the same attendants.

No shadow ever represented the substance which occasioned it so truly ; for however exact its proportions, its hues at least must be dissimilar. No picture, for if accurate in its forms and colours, there is still a wide disparity in the size. Motionless water combines all these in its reflections, but their positions are reversed. What I saw was a repetition, not a correspondence ; it was the same vision presented twice. I looked round for the sequel of my Fawn's revelation. Loud cries were heard from the legions behind me, the shouts of triumph, the ringing and clashing of arms. Furius the centurion, the same Furius, was seen spurring his horse, and demanding a passage through the ranks ; his helmet covered with leaves, a laurel branch lifted in his hand, and as soon as his voice could be distinguished, it announced victory from Cæsada. Manlius will find him in the camp. The army is celebrating no partial success polluted by misfortune. This Fawn is wiser than both of Perpenna's disciples, and I will honor her revelations, come they from whom they may.

VERGILIA.

The rumour of yesterday, then, must have been untrue?

MYRTILIS.

What fugitives were those which brought them, or which followed them? Did they run away from a victory?

MANLIUS.

Was Furius in the battle? How much later is his news than theirs? Perhaps Capito may have fought again?

SERTORIUS.

It seems that he had succeeded in retaining one wing of his little army unbroken, and next day, in collecting most of the soldiers which had been dispersed from the centre. Balbula hastened to his support with seven cohorts, and four *turmæ* of Lusitanian horse. Half a legion of Spanish auxiliaries, disgusted by some recent injustice, deserted from Valerius; and the news of our victory, with the accession of Perpenna, were made known to both armies at the same time.

Capito, better prepared, ventured upon a second combat, and, bravely assisted by the citizens of Cæsada, triumphed in his turn. The two battles

had an interval of no more than two nights and one day. You saw the rest. Ascending the tribunal, I announced this intelligence to the legions, reminding them that it had been conveyed by an earlier and a swifter messenger than the centurion Furius. It seems that you were able to distinguish the Fawn as I raised her from my feet, and no doubt you must have heard the acclamations with which my prophetess was saluted.

The king will now permit me to inform Myrtilis that I came here as a guest, and that he has prepared me for her hospitality.

CHAPTER XI.

ARGUMENT.

The Army of Sertorius at Osca, and of Perpenna at Albula. — Impatience of Myrtilis. — Vergilia retrograde, both in her Antipathies and her Partialities. — Preparations for the Donative, and the other Rewards of Valour. — Arrangements of Sertorius interrupted, and his Reasons for the Change which he makes in them. — Precautions suggested by his Fawn. — She foretells that he will be exposed to danger; — that he will suffer violence; — that his Authority will be contested; — and that he will resign his Command. — Unexpected Arrival of Perpenna. — Both Prætors ascend the Tribunal. — Other Arrivals from the Camp at Albula. — The Orations of Perpenna, — of Sertorius, — and of Junius Libo.

PERPENNA'S legions were encamped in the territories of Orcilis, at no greater distance from Osca than eight or nine miles. Some necessary communications were made between the prætors, on both sides, by messengers. From an army in which discipline was so easy as that at Albula, stragglers wandered daily to Osca seeking their acquaintances, or amusing their idleness. Emissaries also, neither incurious nor inactive, were sent by Perpenna for purposes of his own: but the generals

and their respective friends had held, since their recent separation, no personal intercourse whatever.

A short season was devoted by Sertorius, after so long a march, to repose or festivity, as his soldiers might prefer. He designed to end it with the customary donative. Men distinguished for valour in the late engagements, if recommended by their centurions, were to receive appropriate rewards from the Tribunal. For the centurions and other officers themselves, were golden crowns, chains, collars, and bracelets,—chaplets of oak-leaves and olive-leaves,—armour, horse-furniture, and, what they valued far above all, the general's commendations.

During the interval, Myrtilis was constrained to bridle her curiosity, or rather to renounce it ten times a day. Nor could she foresee the end of this painful necessity. Neither Perpenna, nor Rufo, nor Umbricius, nor Aufidius, nor any other patrician of the rescued army, presented himself at Osca. Such neglect was resented by her as disrespectful to the king. Solicitous for his dignity, she sometimes recommended that he should drive them home again, or put them to the sword;—at other times, more indulgently contemptuous, she accounted for the absence of these new guests

by imputing it to their bashfulness. “It was a proof,” she said, “that so much beating had been well bestowed. Their shame could hardly be greater than the disgrace which occasioned it.”

Manlius, a daily admirer of her eloquence, was almost equally liberal with his own in demanding from Vergilia justice to Sertorius. Nor had he to endure long the discouragements of ill-success. The princess listened to these praises, if not always with acquiescence, with diminished distaste. Through the pride which disdains too hasty a conversion, and which protects its dignity while it retracts its opinions, she seemed to feel pleasure in provoking disputes. Manlius had told her, before their departure from Lucentum, that in the presence of Sertorius, no one could remain hostile to him long. It was necessary that his enemies should remove to a distance, if enemies they would continue. While face to face, their hostility was overcome by the kindness and frankness of his nature, if he wished for a better understanding,—or overawed by the boldness of his scorn, and the generosity of his defiance, if he did not. It was plain that recent antipathies had melted away, or why should the earlier history of Sertorius,—his youthful friendships and unprofessional attachments, excite her curi-

osity? Why so many enquiries whether the prætor had always been a soldier? Whether, when resident in Rome, his home was with his mother? What were his amusements there, his studies, his intimacies? Beside that passion for the chase, which even still filled up the interval between one great battle and another, if any other recreation had engaged him? If he had never preferred the music of festivals and processions to the cry of dogs,—and when a younger man, love to war? On such subjects, Manlius had nothing to conceal, and very little to communicate. “Unlike every other general or statesman,” said he, “at no time of life has Sertorius been seduced by the blandishments of luxury. His soldiers suppose that he lives under the protection of Diana, not merely because the same ardour in the chase which she feels is felt by him, but because he retains the same sanctity in his habits, and the same contempt for effeminacy. Perhaps he indulges his love of dogs and horses as the best preservative from any other love. It seems to him less incompatible with his office as the leader of armies, and the protector of Spain. Be this as it may, nothing is said by him on the subject; for few men ever spoke so little of themselves. He cannot understand how facts and

motives, which appear so insignificant to his own mind, should engage the attention of other people. It proceeds neither from distrust on his part, nor reserve on mine, that I have hardly any truths to tell. Through the same simplicity which we ascribe to the holiest of the deities, he hides nothing because he fears nothing."

The princess had opportunity for observations of her own. Sertorius loved to converse with Orcilis better than with any other person. Such intercourse always left him wiser, he said, by rendering him more composed, less ambitious, and better inclined to peace. Care lost its eagerness, disappointment its vexation, offence its anger, and justice its severity, in a presence so tranquil as the king's. Myrtilis engrossed almost all the offices of state in this little sovereignty. She had become chief counsellor, whether called or not; and a very ready assistant at the deliberations both of war and peace. She constrained the treasurers to be bountiful, the judges to be compassionate, and the generals to be brave. If she disconcerted them and her father, she delighted Sertorius. By her contumacy and waywardness, he was accustomed to the coarser colours of truth, — for truth, which has only one face, has two complexions. He learnt what men said of his

motives when their dispositions were least complimentary, —and whether his Oscan allies were, at all times, quite so well satisfied and sincere, as they professed to be.

In Vergilia he discovered higher faculties with greater prudence. She had been such a child as was deserved by one who died in the defence of his people, and the maintenance of his fidelity. She would be such a wife as Manlius, notwithstanding his courage and his patriotism, did not deserve; for she was without selfishness, and too pure for a noble educated in Rome.

The prætor introduced his Fawn; but the pleasure of her visit was far from reciprocal. Vergilia confessed that she could have been conferred by nothing less than celestial beneficence. Myrtilis terrified the gentle beast with her caresses. It started back from both to the protection of Sertorius. Those large dark eyes watched the princess's without aversion, indeed; but neither of them was the mistress whose messages she carried, and to whose embraces she was recalled. In the camp, Sertorius forbade all restraint, and superstition permitted no violence. She enjoyed liberty, which neither his servants nor his soldiers wished to abridge. She visited the forests and the mountains when she pleased. A hundred

imaginary particulars were circulated as appendages to the truth. It was reported that a lamp had burnt, in the augurale, all night without oil, since her arrival. That consecrated cakes had been snatched from an altar there, and extended to her mouth, by the marble hand of Diana's statue. That neither leopard nor lion, from the fiercest of the prætor's collection, dare look her in the face. And that Ahala, the pontifex maximus, was becoming grey as the penalty of his disbelief, with a solemn intimation that, should he persist in his impiety, he might also become bald.

On the morning of that day which had been appointed for honorary rewards to the most meritorious among the soldiers, and donatives to them all, — the camp rang with preparations commencing before the light. Armour was scoured, weapons were polished, and tents removed. Greener leaves were gathered for the helmets, — fresher flowers for the ensigns. The horns of the victims were gilt, — those of the altars were burnished. Arrangements were made for the just claims of those absent auxiliaries, which could appear only by their officers. All the tents nearest to the tribunal were taken down. Beside the area vacant before, space twice as large was obtained

by their removal. The prætorium was thronged by senators, civil magistrates, foreign ambassadors, and such officers of the highest rank as were always in communication with their general. Legates, military tribunes, commanders of large divisions entered to receive their instructions, and then departed to obey them.

Some of those nearest to the person of Sertorius expressed their surprise at changes in the arrangements and regulations which he had discussed with them the night before. He was seldom accustomed to vary the plans previously proposed; unless, by the intervention of accident or novelty, there was occasion for fresh designs. But what has occurred now? Beside other more distant precautions, the prætor directs that four or five of his younger attendants from the prætorium, should ascend the tribunal with his generals, — that standing behind, and keeping their arms ready for use, they should wait till they were wanted. What did he apprehend? Some sedition not to be attempted in secret, but before more than twenty thousand of his soldiers, and all his friends? “I apprehend nothing so bad,” said he, “as that my Fawn may lose her reputation to-day, — that her divine presence may prove vain, or become questionable. Happy in-

telligence was brought by her from Cæsada, — this time she teaches distrust of friends, and the approach of danger. Look for disputed authority, — prepare for a new general. I have been dismissed — a lower place has been assigned to me. I will receive her revelations neither with confidence nor contempt. After some days' absence, she stood, an hour or two ago, again waiting by my couch till sleep had left me. We have no leisure now for dreams, and the history of her communications might operate injuriously if untrue, uselessly in any case. But if my Fawn speak rightly, I shall be deposed to-day, — and, stranger still, the army will be disbanded by myself. While standing among the ensigns of the Republic, keep danger from behind my back. A hand has been felt upon my throat, — no matter whose it was." This, though not said playfully, was received as a jest well suited to the day's merriment. The legions were assembling; the morning sacrifice had been slain; the aruspices announced that their inspection of the entrails discovered nothing which was not good.

While Sertorius prepared to leave the prætorium and ascend his tribunal, he was stopped by the arrival of Perpenna. Few events were calculated to surprise the prætor; yet this did. He

started when Perpenna, and Aufidius, and Rufo, and the Grecian Sotaris, and five or six more of his patrician associates, were announced. That they had ridden swiftly, was shown by the jaded condition of their horses and attendants. All appeared in the social temper, which was accordant with the occasion. They had come to witness the donative distributed; and they proposed that Sertorius, with his friends, should visit Albula the day following to assist in a similar solemnity. Perpenna had dismissed or forgotten his reserve of late, and everything else which he felt unwilling to remember. He was courteous, jocular, and gay. The diluted wine which thirst and heat had combined to recommend, was partaken freely by them all, but with more than customary dispatch. For, by this time, the army was assembled, and every soldier stood in his appointed place. It was necessary that the prætor should ascend the tribunal without delay. Perpenna, excusing the interruption occasioned by himself and his companions, accompanied Sertorius from the prætorium.

The tribunal close in front had been decorated with ensigns of various forms and significations. Beside the legionary eagles, there were standards from each of the manipuli, open hands engraved

on small oval shields, gilded balls the emblems of universal sovereignty, and other similar devices appropriate either to some historical or some imaginary achievement. Most of the equestrian banners were like little cloaks suspended cross-ways from poles or spears. They and their bearers, but not their horses, were there. All nations have honored their ensigns; many have sworn by them. By the Romans they were worshipped and prayed to as deities not less substantial than any other; objects of religious faith; idols animated and sanctified by wisdom, valour, and fortune. He who surrendered one, incurred the penalty of death: the cowardice of him who refused to follow one, was aggravated by perjury and sacrilege. At present there is a whole grove of these sacred devices glittering aloft. And under them are arranged the rewards for which every heart pants as its title to glory. Beside the crowns of gold, and the more eagerly coveted coronets of oak leaves and olive leaves, there are the torques or golden collars, the armillæ or golden bracelets, the vexillæ or little streamers of silk, the phalaræ, or knightly decorations for horses, and many other attestations to honor lasting longer than the wearer's life. One kind of standard alone was wanting there. Neither

the wishes of his soldiers, nor the remonstrances of his senate, could prevail on Sertorius to assume those sacred letters which preceded victory through the world. S. P. Q. R. were inscribed on more than twenty ensigns which had been torn from the lieutenants of Metellus, but they were all deposited in the augurale.

Sertorius and Perpenna ascended the tribunal together and, advancing to the front of it, stood side by side. The senators, their partisans of patrician dignity, some old generals unconnected with the legions, and such civil officers also as were necessary to republican forms, remained behind. The two prætors were nearly of the same age, bulk, and stature; but Perpenna was the youngest, slenderest, and tallest. As there were no scars on his face, he was at present the handsomest. Not one head remaining behind him in the senate-house at Rome was more elegantly shaped than his. The hair which curled about his temples so loosely and gracefully, had merited the praises of Lucullus. Perhaps it might have been on this account, rather than through heat or fatigue, that Perpenna's helmet was left by him in the prætorium. Unlike his colleague, he stood uncovered, and received the acclamations arising from so many thousands, with a careless

consciousness of high desert. Of his chief right to appropriate them, though his colleague was at his side, he never permitted a doubt.

At the moment when they were subsiding, occurred another interruption. About sixteen or eighteen officers of highest rank were seen forcing their horses through that long vista which ran from the camp's entrance to the tribunal, and which was now crowded by the legionary soldiers. Every spot on which a foot could place itself had been preoccupied. Horses were suffered in the camp sometimes as an occasional irregularity, but never as a privilege. Yet by the intervention of the decurions, room was made for these intruders thrusting forward one by one. Their persons were recognised as well as their dignity, and demanding the hospitality due to strangers, they succeeded at last in reaching the tribunal. Perpenna seemed a little surprised by the discovery that they were from his army at Albula, — legates, tribunes, and the most distinguished of his subordinates. No doubt they must have followed him for the support of his claims and the protection of his authority. Among them were Calvus, Libo, Avienus, and other officers known by Sertorius before either they or he had arrived in Spain.

Every additional occurrence was a new irregularity. Every moment was fertile with something strange. Leaving no time to his colleague, Perpenna extended his hand, and demanded that he might be heard. Silence was procured for him by the intervention of Sertorius. So profound did it become, that the audience appeared as if even respiration were unnecessary to them, and they were made of iron within as well as without.

PERPENNA.

“ Enough has been accomplished by us to show that the Gods are still watchful for the protection of justice and the recompence of valour. Those Romans who, during so many years, sacrificed their fortunes and honors for the republic, now assemble with better hopes. It is to Spain that every region inhabited by mankind deputed the bravest of its children. C. Marius is not yet forgotten, nor will he continue always unrevenged. Such as most love the liberty which he would have secured to us, are already here: the rest prepare for our reception in Rome, or expect us by the way. Daily supplications have been offered to the deities by men who, remembering their former greatness, blush that the exactions of tyranny, or the infirmities of age, have left them nothing more which they

can give. It is from these, and stimulated by their entreaties, that I come. The scattered members of a party, always victorious till it had been disunited, are collected by me here.

“ We have forced a passage for our eagles through both the Gauls. Reversing the enterprise of Hannibal, I have surmounted the Alps and the Pyrenees ; and our march, thus far, is ended by a victory which secures to us not only the possession of Spain, but the hope of Italy. We shall cease to contend for one half only of a divided empire. The legions which so recently rendered Metellus and Pompeius doubtful of their camp, will forbear from rest till our arms are deposited in our houses, and our ensigns in the capitol.

“ Soldiers, you are already on your return to Rome. The journey began twenty days ago. I came hither deputed by the noblest of the senate, the bravest of the people, the wisest and justest of our allies, that I might reconduct you. Grown cautious by the discipline of past calamities, we shall no longer struggle for pre-eminence among ourselves. Jealousies which would oppose our selfishness to the common welfare must be suppressed. A dispirited army is hardly so feeble as a disputed command. The republic has suffered less from

the valour of her enemies, than from the equal authority, and irregular ambition of her generals. Power, which must be delegated for its wider exercise, has never been divided without risk, nor mixed and confounded without disgrace.

“ Hitherto you serve under a commander on whom fortune has conferred honors and victories as the reward of consummate prudence. Still more greatly is Sertorius indebted to the courage of an army which always pre-supposes his success. He has been surpassed by no other general of the republic in rendering his auxiliaries useful, in giving confidence to his allies, in collecting the strength, and sharpening the intelligence, of barbarous tribes. It is this pre-eminence in undisciplined warfare which suggests an easy division of our authority, secure from discord, and advantageous to us both. I depute to my colleague a command for which he is pre-eminently qualified, not only by the habit and practice of many years, but by the peculiar tendency of his genius. At Albula, and wherever else their presence may be required, he will preside over the auxiliary legions of Spain—the Lusitanian horse—the Mauritanian and Sicilian mercenaries—the deserters from Metellus which have not been incorporated among yourselves—and, whe-

ther archers or slingers, the rest of the lighter-armed. Commissioned by all that is venerable in the republic, I shall unite, with such Roman knights as prefer Osca and the camp to more distant service, the six legions which are assembled before me here and the eight which were conducted by me into Spain."

The air was not more silent than the audience, for neither seemed to breathe. Long practice in elocution enabled many of the patricians to address numerous and distant hearers with the assurance that they should be understood. A voice sonorous as well as clear, an articulation distinct, deliberate, and skilfully modulated, were accompanied at present by all the confident superiority of high rank. He who spoke had been twice a candidate for the consulship. Such a rhetorician could not be embarrassed. Perpenna had controverted in the senate-house the opinions of Crassus; and once, he had pleaded in the forum, against a client of Cicero. On this occasion, after he had ceased to speak, the same silence continued undisturbed among those who heard him. Every eye and ear waited the interpretation. Was it credible that he had assumed the command even at Osca? Bringing from Rome the confidence of his party, was this

new general come to direct the struggle for universal empire, and to supersede Sertorius? The soldiers gazed earnestly, as if there were something else for them to hear. They had no leisure to observe the reflection of their own amazement in each other's faces. Could it be possible that Sertorius had partaken in an arrangement by which the confederate nations were divided, and that he was become, not the colleague, but the lieutenant of Perpenna?

During some moments, Sertorius remained as silent as themselves, though free from the same perplexity. Every occasion was appropriated by him to collect or extort that knowledge which it might supply for future use. While listening to his colleague's address, he watched its effect upon the soldiers, and especially upon such officers as were the least patient of discipline, or most eager for novelty. Were the fickle pleased? were the ambitious heated? did the restless and discontented seize eagerly on the promises of home? At its conclusion he yet allowed time for a change of will — or for will, if changed, to declare its purpose. Many thousand eyes, fixed upon his countenance, were demanding what he thought — what he proposed to do — and whether, as the proconsul had become a

prætor, the prætor designed to pass down one step lower still, and to become a lieutenant. Beside that his voice, deeper and stronger than that of Perpenna, was not less clear, he enjoyed another advantage, the hearers had been longer accustomed to. There was the same confidence and facility; but the composure of what he said when calm, was without constraint, and the warmth when excited, free from artifice.

SERTORIUS.

“ It is uncertain whether I should still call you the soldiers of Sertorius and the republic, or of a party by whose appointment Perpenna has been sent to Spain. Among so many novelties, there may be a necessity for new names. This difficulty will be the less embarrassing to me if, as he announces, I must address you for the last time. He assumes the command of fourteen Roman legions. He takes possession of Osca and the camp. He delegates to me a subordinate authority at Albula—not only over our confederates, but over mercenaries and deserters, the African slingers, the Sicilian archers, and the Lusitanian horse. He allows us no more than the present rest before his departure for Rome, and then traversing the Pyrenees and the Alps—this

other Hannibal will accomplish a second time, what the Carthaginian did but once.

“ I will not profit by any possible misconception, or by the bashfulness with which your new general has suppressed some of his claims to confidence, and overlooked others. Too generous for such comparisons between him and me, he speaks only of the eight veteran legions conducted by him into Spain—a large army even before it was united with another still larger. He spares the humiliation with which I must have heard that my own entrance here, less than nine years ago, was accompanied by no more than eighteen hundred Romans and seven hundred Africans. Such were my preparations for a war against four generals of the republic, with a hundred and twenty thousand veteran soldiers commissioned by Sylla, and commanded by Metellus. The weakest of Perpenna’s eight legions was far more than equivalent to the whole army collected by me. Who then dare question whether his claims to supremacy should not be estimated by the same proportions—by what he is accomplishing for the liberty of the republic and the protection of Spain?

“ Soldiers, in seven years you have reconquered more cities and provinces than had been lost by

the lieutenants of Marius. The whole of Spain wishes you success—the larger half of Spain is under your protection, or engaged in your alliance. As Perpenna declares, almost every region upon earth has sent to us the bravest of its children. Five times has Metellus retired before you to his camp, and once into Gaul. What need had you for this assistance, of which Perpenna boasts, from beyond the Alps? Who asked for it—and to what extent have we profited by it? Did he find me treating for the submission of my army, and hopelessly protracting its surrender till the next day? Were you and I rescued by his intervention from the axes of Metellus? Whose camp had been besieged? Whose supplications had been rejected? Were they mine or his?

“Even if C. Marius shall return to offer it, never will I accept a subordinate command: never but this once, will I hold my authority through your appointment. It is forbidden by the majesty of Rome and the discipline of her armies, that the soldier should select his general. From every province of the republic you came here in search of me; you freely offered your services, and swore obedience by your standards. While these eagles are seen above our heads, it is an oath from which I only, or death only, can absolve you. Soldiers,

you are free! At this moment you are no longer soldiers. Perpenna offers to you an easier service — accept it if you will. His legions are not subject to the severities of discipline. You will have chosen your general, and may follow him no longer than you please. Leaving war and Metellus behind him, he will conduct you to Rome. Those who remain here with me, must fight before they triumph — must enter the camp of their enemies, before they ascend the steps of the Capitol. They will endure the same labours as heretofore, and prepare for greater. You are now free, I absolve you from your sacraments. If they shall be repeated to myself, remember that a more deliberate engagement will tolerate no future excuse through change of will. A single apostacy is enough. Those citizens who swear once more as the soldiers of Sertorius, will suffer a shameful death if their obedience is again transferred, and their eagles a second time deserted.”

The loud burst of scorn, the tumult of wonder awakening into indignation — the rattle of one iron-coated body against another, as it was agitated by the flame within — delighted, for it deceived, Perpenna. Sertorius had freed his soldiers from their oaths, and had ended with a threat! They were seduced by the promise of Italy — the desire

of home — their hearts had travelled already to the city gates! But this ambitious commander of fourteen Roman legions received some clearer intimations of his mistake when the nearest centurions demanded, some that he should be hurled from the tribunal, others that he should be sent in chains as due to Metellus. Materculus, one of the most distinguished among them, lifting his right hand open above his head, cried louder than the voices around him, “I repeat my oaths! before these eagles I swear again!” A thousand hands and tongues were engaged in the same vow at almost the same moment. As soon as its meaning could be communicated to the multitudes standing too far from the tribunal for the reach of any human utterance, there was instant concurrence, with even greater vehemence. These soldiers feared that, through their remoteness from their general, they might remain unobserved by him.

No small danger was incurred by the legates and military tribunes from Albula, whose horses were crowded together between the legionaries and the tribunal. It was furiously asked, by voices close to their ears, “for what purpose, and through whose invitation, they had been brought where they were? Did they abandon their own

camp lest it might be a second time besieged by Metellus? or were they the Carthaginian guards of this second Hannibal?" Happily three or four were well known as among the bravest soldiers of the republic. Junius Libo, covered by the wounds and the decorations which his services had earned under Marius, Cinna, and at one time even Sertorius himself, presented no other attribute of age than a white head. By such pressure crushed against the tribunal, the legate's helmet and the feet of Sertorius were on the same level, and not far apart. He entreated that he might be heard. Appealing to Sertorius, and pointing to the concourse, he demanded hospitality as a guest, who had once fought under the same ensigns. Perpenna, always careless of discipline, vehemently insisted on this privilege as due to an officer so highly distinguished. But the tribunal was too sacred for vulgar debate. It belonged to the general, not as a rostrum for controversy, but as a resting-place where justice might deliberate, and power might reward or punish. Nevertheless in such a tempest, and in the position which he occupied at present, by no possibility could Libo make his meaning to be understood. Before he might secure silence, it was necessary that the soldiers should see him as well as hear. "Well —

let him ascend," said Sertorius. "A few minutes ago, I disbanded my army, and there has been no leisure since for the re-establishment of its discipline. The tribunal is hardly mine yet!" By the assistance of his associates, Libo's feet were first raised upon his horse's back, and thence upon the little mound beyond. Whether for himself or others, Sertorius could always obtain the attention which he required.

J. LIBO.

"It has been asked by whose authority, and for what purpose, are we here? Each of the eight legions conducted by Perpenna into Spain sends a tribune and a legate as its delegates. Wisely and truly has he shown us to-day that a dispirited army is hardly so feeble as a distrusted commander; that jealousies which obstruct the public welfare by their selfishness, should be overruled; and that supreme power never has been divided without danger, or confounded without disgrace. On this account it is, that in our own names, and on behalf of the legions which have sent us here, we swear, as you have sworn, obedience to Sertorius.

"Soldiers, we have not forgotten so soon the cries of insult around our camp — the threatened chains and axes of Metellus, his obduracy against

what he called thrice-conquered fugitives from Sylla, or the supplications made to him in vain for his acceptance of our submission if he would defer it till the next day. Our ears still tingle with the proclamations of infamy, and the confessions of helplessness. We are not willing to trust the same guidance a second time, or to forget by whose providence and intervention we escaped. Our eagles have become less sacred since their surrender was offered as the price of safety. On the following day they would have been transferred even without an equivalent so base as this. It is because we would not again expose their sanctity to similar desecration, that we place ourselves and them under the governance of wiser counsels.

“Let Perpenna observe his own rules, and he shall still be the commander of his eight legions. There is an easy division of authority, secure from discord, and advantageous to us all. It is only as the younger colleague of Sertorius that he can retain our service. With subordinate power, and in the second place, he may acquire more honor than by any other means.

“Soldiers, the legions which we represent are on their march from Albula. At noon they will be here. They ask for honors similar to those which you will receive to-day, on condition that

they wait till they have deserved them. If we are rejected by your prætor and yourselves, we shall neither disperse, nor go back. In hope of a better welcome than you seem disposed to give, and secure of easier conditions than those which we so lately asked from Metellus, leaving Perpenna and our defiance behind us, we shall pass on."

Before he could turn round, or was aware of his danger, Libo might have been precipitated from the tribunal among his associates below, if Sertorius had not interposed. Perpenna's hand was upon his neck behind. The exasperated prætor had lost all self-restraint or sense of decency. During a momentary struggle, the same hand transferred its grasp from the neck of Libo to the throat of Sertorius. It was stricken on one side, and jerked almost from the shoulder blade. First by the attendants of Sertorius, and then by Aufidius, Umbricius, Rufo, and his other noble companions, was Perpenna dragged backward into the prætorium.

The spectators had been too well pleased before, for much concern at an irregularity like this. There was some novelty in buffets between two prætors; but while one prætor disappeared, the other laughed. All became mirthful again. A

donative was announced, double rations of corn, double payments of silver, till that day month. The rewards were distributed, and, in almost every instance, as the soldiers had wished. Libo and his associates were honorably entertained. Preparations were made for the reception of Perpenna's eight legions in a camp divided from that of Sertorius no farther than by the river. This plan had, indeed, grave objections, political as well as military ; but the accommodation of so large a host, under the same superintendency, left to the prætor no safer choice.

CHAPTER XII.

ARGUMENT.

Castra Hyberna. — Sertorius dislikes the too great proximity of his own Camp and that of Perpenna. — He re-establishes his Colleague's authority, and finds distant employment for the Mutinous. — His Personal Tastes simple;—his Public and Professional Habits magnificent.—The reception of his Guests and Embassies. — His Treaty with Mithridates. — He sends Marcus Marius to Asia as his Pro-prætor. — Provident for the Majesty of Rome, and in the maintenance of Freedom. — His love of the Chase profitable to him.

Perpenna's Amusements during the Winter.—The Luxurious Splendour of his Prætorium. — His Visits to Osca. — The Use which he makes of King Orcilis. — Manlius among his Familiars. — Manlius an unskilful Lover, and too tolerant Guest. — Myrtilis still studies the Discipline of Perpenna's School, and is profuse in her Patronage. — The Fawn extends her Fame. — Becomes an Assistant to Justice on the Tribunal. The two Purses and Chain of Gold.

THE camps of Sertorius and Perpenna were separated by a river, which, before the bridges were built, might be crossed at twenty fords. The two parts constituted more than one whole, only because there was a prætorium, with its customary appendages, in each. Wide and rapid, the river was also shallow and rocky. Sertorius

would have preferred a less easy communication, and intercourse less free. Between his own camp and the mountain solitudes, through which were introduced no small portion of his supplies, was now placed this ill-regulated obstruction. New roads were to be formed, additional outposts to be guarded. He also disliked the sedition of Perpenna's legions, however advantageous to his own supremacy. Notwithstanding the apology or the necessity, it was a mischievous precedent. Tribunes and legates had broken up their encampment, and, in open contempt of their general, had transferred his ensigns to another commander. Sertorius felt no apprehension that such power, extorted from his colleague by subordinate officers, would be directed hereafter against himself. But it ill-agreed with the sobriety of that justice for which he fought, and the majesty of those laws by which his office was sanctioned. The Oscan senate had no participation here. So daring a breach of republican authority would be proclaimed in Rome, and censured every where. Nor did he esteem this large addition to his army as an equivalent. Old soldiers who have lost their discipline, are less reclaimable than younger men, by whom their duties are disregarded, because till now they have been unknown. Perpenna

boasted of eight legions, but his army would have consisted of no more than fifty-four cohorts, if all had been complete. He was obliged to weaken his ranks and multiply his eagles in support of his arithmetic.

Sertorius never dragged behind him yesterday's regrets. His first thought was the correction of mischance, his next the means by which it might be rendered profitable, or at least harmless. On every account he determined to re-establish the authority of Perpenna as his colleague, and to appropriate, from the present temper of a mutinous army, no ungenerous advantage. Perpenna had collected that army, had conducted it into Spain, had brought with it much wealth of his own, and the contributions of many opulent partisans. His family was powerful, his resources were ample, the names of liberty and Marius on his ensigns were popular still. To have superseded and dismissed him, even in self-defence, must have appeared ambitious and extortionate, rather than provident or honest. Winter, which was not remote, would suspend the operations of war by its frosts and snows, and then severer discipline might be established under a more resolute superintendency. Perhaps even the restless prætor himself would become in-

noxious through the sense of weakness. As is usual, there remained another and a stronger reason unassigned: any want of forbearance towards her friend's son, would distress that noble mother whom Sertorius never had disobeyed.

Perpenna's fury was soon assuaged. His patrician associates were surprised that, after the first convulsions of disappointed pride, there should have been such a philosophical reflux. The effusions of rage were exhausted in a week. Wisdom meditates rather on what it may have gained unexpectedly, than what it has lost irretrievably. Some honor was gone; but we grow patient through habit, and this was not the first time. Some authority had escaped; but Perpenna was a prætor still with six lictors, a colleague of Sertorius with eight legions, a conqueror of Metellus and Pompeius, as attested by his epistles to Rome. His army had subsisted during its march through Gaul by rapine, his friends by extortion, and he was not much less rich at present, than at the commencement of his enterprise. And now for repose, while the more anxious operations of war, or the discipline preparatory to it, are usurped by Sertorius.

Sertorius hastened the return of his good

humour, by detaching to distant provinces the legates and military tribunes through whose sedition he had been deposed. J. Libo, with seven cohorts, was appointed to the command at Ocana. Avienus supported P. Messala at Patavonium with five. The younger Pansa had an honorable mission in Lusitania. By such arrangements, the one prætor was disengaged from watchful subordinates whom he felt unable to control, commanders of courage and experience who had detected his incapacity; and the other prætor could reward merit at a distance from the camp without countenancing disaffection there. Every deduction from Perpenna's cohorts rendered the remainder more manageable. Each of these politicians understood the reasoning which determined the other. Perpenna, less candid than his colleague, did not say that he wished for the command of such an army as he could corrupt and govern, preparatory to loftier enterprises. But Sertorius avowed the policy of dividing the mutinous and employing the discontented. He anticipated Perpenna's conjectures, by explaining them. He took small pains to conceal from him that, if such visionary aspirations might again awake, they should do no greater harm the second time than they had done the first.

Simple as were his own habits, Sertorius encouraged magnificence. At his table, on ordinary occasions, there were in attendance either professional readers, and the familiar discussions which had been suggested by what they read; or men of science, with their proposals and speculations, from Greece, Asia, Egypt, and Italy. The presents which had been sent to him from princes and provinces demanding his alliance, were largely dispensed as perquisites among the brave, the learned, the enterprising, and the ingenious. Cups of gold filled with coin have been often carried from his pavilion by men who were constrained to borrow the garments in which they appeared there. His larger feasts were sumptuous in the extreme; but so temperate and orderly, that, had the vestals been his guests, they might have shared in the conversation.

During this winter he received several distant embassies, the chief of which was from Mithridates. Reserved and stately as they were, the Asiatic satraps found it difficult to suppress their admiration at regularity and magnificence which they could hardly have expected in Rome. His banquets, they said, were royal. But this exile from the republic rejected even the commencement of negotiations inconsistent with its supre-

macy. From the greatest monarch upon earth, this rebellious fugitive exacted for Rome the same conditions and concessions as Sylla, during his dictatorship, would have approved. "What orders will Sertorius send us when he is seated in the Capitol," exclaimed the astonished king, on receiving their report from his ambassadors, "if now, driven as he has been to the coasts of the Atlantic Ocean, he prescribes bounds to my sovereignty, and threatens me with war in Asia unless I forbear!" But by the same report, he learnt the value of such an ally, and grew yet more eager for the confederacy.

The senators at Osca remonstrated against demands so imperious, and, as they thought them, so impolitic. "Not our own interests should be our chief care," replied the prætor, "but the power and majesty of Rome. Let the conquered cities and provinces which have been accustomed to a kingly government, pass again under the dominion of Mithridates:—never will I withhold protection from the free, or accept any thing in exchange for those who appeal to liberty." It was the tyranny of Rome which he resisted, not her supremacy. While a fugitive, indeed, from Metellus, and the price offered for his death or his surrender—the Spanish princes were never per-

mitted by him to forget their provincial dependence. He would protect such smaller birds from the eagle's beak and talons, without confounding the distinctions of nature, or destroying the privileges conferred by destiny.

Forty large galleys, and three thousand talents, were the price paid by Mithridates for such an equivocal alliance even as this. Sertorius despatched Marcus Marius to command as pro-prætor in Cappadocia and Bithynia. And nobly did this Marcus Marius sustain the dignity of his mission. In the name of Sertorius, he carried his rods and axes into cities which had surrendered to Mithridates, redemanding them from the king. Some he declared free—to others he remitted their taxes, as the property of Rome. Whole provinces which had recently been conquered from the republic, were restored by him to her sovereignty.

The season was now too late for the movements of large armies. Snow had fallen upon the mountains. With the exception of some short repose earned by extraordinary fatigue, Sertorius allowed to his soldiers but little leisure, and to himself none at all. Labor was their amusement, and the change of labor their recreation. Beside the military evolutions so necessary to discipline, their

Campus Martius resounded, every day, with cries animating the combatants or rewarding the conquerors. Their sports were running, wrestling, leaping, shooting the arrow, hurling the javelin, striking with the spear. Often was Sertorius a spectator of these contests, and sometimes a competitor in them. No other man could cut, with the sword, through so thick a helmet fixed above a post; or displace so great a weight, by rushing against it with his left shoulder, and the shield on his left arm.

But war had not ceased, though its operations were restricted. On both sides, there were assaults and surprises,—cities reduced, convoys of forage intercepted, and distant detachments under improvident commanders, either captured or overthrown. Vigilance was not less necessary elsewhere, because the legions were stationary. When Sertorius indulged his love of the chase, it was preparatory to the next campaign, and almost always nearer to the enemies' camp than his own. Every pass among the mountains became familiar to him. He learnt which rivers, in what parts, and at what seasons, might be forded or obstructed—where herbage sufficient for his horses might be found in spring—and, if overmatched or intercepted, by what valleys he could retire. More

than once were the *Excubiæ* of Metellus startled by his horns and hounds—and the ramparts of their camp have been crowded with soldiers, indignant witnesses to a chase which would end before they might interpose. Pompeius, though so much younger than his colleague, never ventured into the solitudes between, unless he was accompanied by an escort large enough for security, and too large for sport.

But by such continual change of place, Sertorius seemed to be almost continually present in each. Entrusting his dogs to Balbinus or Læca, he often eluded his other companions, and riding far away from both armies alone, he superintended operations in distant provinces, for which even his lieutenants were unprepared. And yet, before the litigants or the soldiers at Osca could feel uneasy at his disappearance, his seat on the tribunal there was again filled.

Both prætors seemed to be intent on their amusements. Perpenna, since his departure from Rome, had never felt security so luxurious as at present. But for the whispers of ambition, he would have been quite at his ease. They, indeed, represented Rome with her subservient senate, her terrified citizens, her triumphs, and spectacles, and solicitations, all designed for him—the popu-

larity of Marius, the authority of Sylla—his enemies in exile, his calumniators in chains, his creditors kneeling before the lictors. Such visions as the conquest of Asia and universal supremacy—with a treasury to which every region upon earth, and every family among mankind, was a dutiful contributor—suffered no disturbance excepting from his colleague. It was resolved that the usurper should be deposed by methods safer than force, though less expeditious. At length the treasures which had travelled so far without much diminution, were to be freely dispensed. Soldiers who would not yield to the seductions of pleasure, or even the remembrances of home, might be bought with gold. Large sums were expended for more mischievous purposes than luxury.

Waiting the growth of this golden grain scattered as seed among the tents, the philosophical prætor had made ample provision for his present amusements. His prætorium was crowded; yet, if Hannibal and Scipio could have lived any where together, they might have found room in it to spare. No such baths had been seen in Spain. Hardly were two large galleys sufficient—one to convey its pavement, the other its statues. He had imported the best mimic of Syracuse, and the

most active rope-dancer of Alexandria. The rope-dancer exhibited his skill crowned and attired like Orcilis. The mimic, pretending to the use of only one eye, fought many disadvantageous battles with an imaginary Metellus. Every wind brought wanderers from distant regions—military, civil, and some of neither kind. Perpenna was followed by six or seven discontented senators, who had lost their fortunes—by twenty or thirty degraded knights, who had been deprived of their horses—by commanders who had been cashiered for peculation—by soldiers who had been disbanded for mutiny—by dancers, tumblers, comedians, parasites, and courtesans.

The two prætors had little intercourse. It was observed that, when at the same table, Perpenna conformed to the chaster language of his colleague; but the restraint was irksome, and the necessity for it humiliating. Their friends on both sides mixed freely. Soldiers of the same rank, they had too many Roman associations and recollections for much reserve. Many of them had been previously acquainted, some of them were connected by marriage, or other relationship, with the same families. For instance, Manlius was the school-fellow of Junius Silanus, and his first campaign had been spent in the

companionship of the younger Milo. A Lucius Manlius, his cousin, attended Perpenna into Spain, and was then at Albocella.

There are many men who find indemnification for the restraint of their tongues by a larger licence to their eyes and ears. Manlius, with all his sobriety, loved to witness the excesses of other people. By such comparisons we learn the height and breadth of our superiority in virtue. He accepted news from discreditable quarters, and smiled at extravagances in which he did not partake. That aristocratic school described by him to Vergilia and Myrtilis, and of which Perpenna was the chief pedagogue, amused his curiosity. The sciences taught in it were, perhaps, as objectionable to him as before. But while sitting at table with the luxurious, it is far from imperative that we should partake in their vices as well as their wild-boar's flank, and their sweet wine nine years old. Before the sunshine of smiles, in which there is no more ridicule than may be reconciled with our self-respect, slight scruples will melt like the hoar-frost. Perpenna laughed playfully at the quæstor's reserve. Umbricius, Aufidius, Mæcenas, and Rufo were clamorous against his sobriety. "He has learnt temperance from love," said they, "he has de-

served Bacchus for Cupid. These relatives who disagree to-night may be reconciled to-morrow : if so, one of them will punish him for his unfaithfulness, and both of them for his hypocrisy."

This love grew daily less pure, and more presumptuous. Not through any consciousness of their insufficiency did Manlius strive to recommend his own good qualities by urging and recapitulating those of the prætor. We claim some participation in the virtue, or the courage, or the wisdom, which we so well know how to appreciate. Praise is a modest intimation of sympathy. Manlius understood the advantages of vicarious excellence, yet was he successful in no more than the object which he professed. He gradually removed all antipathies from the prætor by attracting them to himself. The princess struggled hard to retain for him some gleanings of esteem, or at worst of gratitude ; but then that air, so self-sufficient in its patronage, grew more obtrusive every day. Every day did he remind her that the one had become greater of late, and the other less. Alas ! gratitude, even as the foundation to love, is unstable ; it crushes the edifice, if we reserve it for the roof ! Manlius, a clumsy architect, much too confident in his own skill, and in the scientific appli-

cation of old materials, mistook a buttress for a pinnacle !

Even the prætor, notwithstanding his partiality, perceived that the defence of Lucentum was appreciated at its utmost worth. And at last, these obligations of gratitude so usuriously exacted, to what did they amount? Spain, freed from Metellus, would revert to its princes, Lucentum would belong to Vergilia, Vergilia to Manlius. The quæstor had fought so well for the protection of an ally, for the cause of liberty, for a princess and an heiress, for his own marriage-portion, and, during his banishment to Spain, for a luxurious home !

Perpenna too was the confederate of Orcilis, and in constant communication with him. By his own account, he had come into Spain for the king's protection. Never did he acknowledge even the slightest disparity between his official pretensions and those of Sertorius. They were colleagues, each commanding a great army. Encamped under the walls of his capital, it was politic that Perpenna should demand a full share in the venerable monarch. He and his friends were almost daily visitors at Osca. Their rank as senators who had sustained high offices civil and military, entitled them to ready access, and

respectful reception — the more ready and respectful because it was never either social or cordial. Without danger to the confederacy, Orcilis could not have repelled their pretensions. Myrtilis distinguished them among her father's guests as the recent bearers of some new science, some great discovery for the public welfare and her own erudition.

If Perpenna felt wearied by the king's taciturnity, no such imperfection could be imputed to the princess. And sometimes brief oracles fell from the sage's lips well worth the trouble of collection for domestic use. They supplied mirth to the supper table. Comedians and buffoons disguised themselves with the robes and fasces of their master's lictors, that they might accompany him under the king's own roof, and learn there his royal gestures and habitual phrases. At night, some sceptred dwarf was seated on his little throne, bearing on the head his little coronet, and distilling drop by drop his little maxims. The descendant from Saturn had his representative dancing, with philosophical solemnity, among tumblers, camp-boys, and women shameless as either. Manlius witnessed such exhibitions with more than becoming acquiescence. He remonstrated vehemently at the addition of two courte-

zans, representing Myrtilis on the mock king's right hand, and Vergilia on his left: yet after they had been dismissed, he resumed his seat.

Ignorant as she was of the offence, the real Myrtilis had her revenge by anticipation. No mimic could adequately represent the simple earnestness with which she questioned Perpenna about his school—its doctrines and disciples—the system of economy established in it—the providence by which he was enabled to live so splendidly at the public expense—his sale of other men's property, his patronage with other men's offices, his preference for other men's wives—the art of war, which, as far as she understood it, consisted in escaping from an enemy till compelled to fight, and a second time, escaping as soon as the battle had commenced. Aufidius, Umbricius, Rufo, and Mæcenus were complimented on their proficiency under so great a captain. She promised them the protection of the king her father, who was himself averse from strife. And she hoped that Metellus and Pompeius would be as unsuccessful in the pursuit of them as their creditors had been.

Perpenna had too much gallantry for any other contention with a princess so fair and playful, than that which she provoked. He and his

friends were consoled by each other's tortures. The nausea arising from an endless repetition of the same flatteries, was relieved by such pungent condiments so profusely scattered. It was necessary to their high breeding that they should pelt the challenger with missiles like her own, though not so hard. "Manlius must be the talebearer," they said. "There were tales of a different kind about Manlius, which should be withheld, not through tenderness for him, but in compassion to Vergilia. It was far from Lucentum that he had learnt the first rudiments of love under teachers more obdurate. Let the quæstor boast, as he did, of his success. One tender heart in Spain was a tardy consolation for the cruelties of ten hard or fickle enough in Rome." Vergilia, who heard every syllable in an hour, was partly recompensed for the shame and indignation kindled by these boasts, through the belief that they extinguished the quæstor's title both to her gratitude and her remorse.

In warfare of this kind, the advantage is not always with the assailant, nor even with the victorious. Perpenna's friends provoked contention, that they might gain the right to accuse. They repelled and retaliated, they supplied to the common enemy weapons at each other's expense.

By these arts, they ascertained how much was known of them already at Osca, what truths it would be useless to contradict, what suspicions it might be prudent, if possible, to anticipate, and, above all, the comparative estimate between Sertorius and Perpenna, as the future protector of Spain.

The Fawn spent a much larger portion of her time among the mountains than in the camp. It was observed that her departure appeared to be hastened by some sudden call which she instantly obeyed. Universal gladness welcomed her return, for intelligence was sure to follow it, always useful at least, and generally fortunate. The soldiers believed that she brought either divine warnings in time to prevent evil, or the promise of success. They crowded about the prætorium, they looked for her on the tribunal. Sertorius encouraged their trust in her prescience. By her advice he strengthened cities which were in danger, or withdrew unnecessary protection from the provinces which were safe, or assaulted neglected posts, or intercepted ill-guarded convoys. Perhaps he may have sometimes ascribed to her sagacity the happy consequences of his own. It was policy to confirm the belief that he acted under divine guidance for the public welfare. But there can

be no doubt of his own sincerity in the same faith. For he manifested confidence which would have dispelled the credulity of his soldiers unless it had been justified by the result. On one occasion he decorated his pavilion with garlands preparatory to a feast, in celebration of joyful news not yet arrived by any other messenger.

The whole camp rang with a new proof of his Fawn's foresight. She often followed her master to the tribunal, where, beside the lictors and other ministers of justice, many hundred officers and soldiers were daily assembled. She usually lay close beside his chair, her head resting upon his knee, and her neck half spanned by his left hand. Before the prætorium, was the chief thoroughfare of the camp, a large area opening to its different quarters. Soldiers and civilians were continually crossing it. Those who had no business to detain them there, entered it and left it often without even turning their heads that way, or thinking of the tribunal.

On one occasion Sertorius had listened to pleadings, the usual concourse of litigants and spectators standing around. In the midst of a cause which, at that moment, excited more than ordinary attention, the Fawn sprang from her master's side, and he, in another instant, from

his seat. An occurrence of far greater importance would have awakened less surprise. Such emotion was witnessed there for the first time. Pointing at two persons whose armour was covered by their winter cloaks, and who were slowly retiring across the area at a distance from the crowd, the prætor despatched his lictors for their arrest. A passage was made through the bystanders, and they were instantly confronted with Sertorius. Contrary to custom, he still remained upon his feet. The oldest of these men was recognised as Lucius Calvus, a freedman, who had accompanied Aufidius into Spain, and was employed by him as his secretary. The other was Titus Pollius, a decurion from the third Sertorian legion then stationed at Ausula.

Allowing no breathing-time for their consternation, the prætor commanded that Pollius should produce a chain of gold suspended by his girdle, and two large purses attached to his sword-belt. While the astonished culprit turned to look at his companion as an accuser by whom he had been corrupted only that he might be betrayed, the lictors plucked aside his cloak. A long and heavy chain of gold, and two purses of strong leather well filled, were concealed beneath it. "Pollius has not spoken falsehood

yet," said the prætor, "he is now leaving the camp that he may rejoin his brother's cohort at Ausula. For what purpose was that gold entrusted to you, Titus Pollius?" The decurion, finding no leisure for equivocation, and believing that he had been already denounced by his confederate, replied—that the one purse was for his own use—the other to corrupt the cohort under the command of his brother Lucius—and the golden chain was for Lucius himself if he would submit to be seduced. "He is yet innocent," said Pollius, "and so was I three days ago. These presents are sent from Perpenna, in the name and through the agency of this traitor here." "Carry them to your brother in my name," said Sertorius; "tell him to wear the chain, and to distribute the money among his soldiers. He is still honest: both of you were always brave. Say that I consign Titus the younger brother to the honor and vigilance of Lucius the elder. Lictors, let him go! What answer does Calvus make?"

Calvus, confident in Perpenna's protection, replied, that "he had committed no offence—that every man had the privilege of making presents to his friends—that Pollius was a fool who had misunderstood his commission—and that if

there were any other accuser, he would meet him face to face." "The accuser is here," said Sertorius, pointing to his Fawn. "I too, saw this—and heard this—last night. Let Faustus brand him as a slave. Despatch him, with the deserters Manius and Glabrio, to Lusitania. He shall carry a chain heavier than that of Pollius. His sentence is for life."—The prætor then resumed his seat, and without adding or hearing another word on that subject, he commanded the former pleadings to recommence.

Perpenna had never seen the Fawn, nor was she ever known to visit his side of the river. He expressed unmeasured scorn at her pretensions. This was a fresh impeachment against the injustice and superstition of Sertorius, who had condemned a freedman on such testimony. Nevertheless, Calvus rowed upon the Tagus in the galleys—Sertorius found that his colleague's gold was less incautiously distributed—and, through such contumelies, the Fawn's sanctity suffered no disgrace.

CHAPTER XIII.

ARGUMENT.

The Caricatani. — Their Robberies and Strongholds. — Junius Libo distressed and endangered by them. — Gitto, a Mercenary from Bætica, confirms his Complaints. — Sertorius marches hastily to his Relief. — Is guided by a Goatherd. — Obstructed and embarrassed by the Fawn. — Divides his Army. — Confides the Half of it to her Conduct. — Fights a Battle. — Detects Treason. — Finds Gitto. — Loses the Goatherd. — Pleases and besieges the Caricatani.

SEVEN cohorts under two military tribunes from Perpenna's army, with more than an equal number of African and Cicilian mercenaries, were commanded by Junius Libo beyond the Tagus. His communication with Osca had been interrupted by the Caricatani, a barbarous tribe not otherwise unfriendly to Sertorius than through the lust of plunder. It was the passage of supplies, and of the traffic attendant on armies remote from each other, which inflamed their cupidity. Robbers they had always been—but not, as at present, nationally and confederately such, with a strong hand and in boastful defiance.

Formerly they committed thefts—now they wage war.

Nor was there any danger incurred by them beyond that which might arise at the moment, and on the spot. Their booty, if they could overcome the resistance which protected it, was beyond recovery, and they themselves might laugh at retribution. For these tribes had neither cities, nor villages, nor property of any kind that could be approached. Their flocks, at the first alarm, were widely scattered among almost inexorable pastures far away from their abodes. Had pursuit been practicable, such an indemnification would have ill repaid the risk and labor which must have been incurred in re-collecting them. A still safer depositary for their families and their plunder was afforded by precipices which no unpermitted foot could scale, and caverns inaccessible to the most adventurous of their own goats. They boasted that their children alone might defy the different armies assembled in Spain—that if they were ever conquered at all, it must be by the birds, or by assailants to whom the birds had lent their wings. Inhabiting a district which might hardly be avoided, even at the cost of time as well as labor and danger—and secure against punishment—

their audacity seized upon the convoys from Osca, slaying or enslaving the soldiers who defended them. Libo's little army lost such of its supplies as could not be collected from the country around him. Its communications were cut off. Should he be overmatched by the pro-consuls or their lieutenants, there was no longer any passage open in either direction for his retreat.

The cohorts composing it had been despatched from Perpenna's camp, and as they still remained nominally his, their reinforcements also should have been sent by him. But he had proved either so sparing, so tardy, so unskilful, or so insincere, that the pass was, at length, absolutely lost. By private messengers, who had travelled through more circuitous roads to Sertorius, Libo complained that Perpenna's revenge gratified itself in this manner for the late mutinous revolt against his authority—that Libo and the forces commanded by him were sacrificed to malignant pride—that the communication might have been maintained, and might still be restored—but that his own cohorts were no more than sufficient for the position which they occupied—and that if he divided them, or weakened them, it would be lost.

Concurrent with these representations, arrived the intelligence that Titus Racilius, who had last been commissioned by Perpenna to clear the pass, was slain, as was the whole, or almost the whole of his detachment. Sertorius could hear of no more than one soldier that had escaped the carnage through his horse's speed,—a mercenary from Bætica, named Gitto. The prætor narrowly questioned this fugitive, who confirmed much which had been learnt before, representing the pass as unavoidable, and yet as impenetrable.

“There is no road,” said he, “by any other way. Every practicable communication beside this, has been preoccupied by the proconsuls. A much larger force than the detachment committed to Racilius, would have been equally unsuccessful. The caverns inhabited by these barbarians are unapproachable, both from above and below. If any soldier beside myself has survived the slaughter, he must have preferred slavery to death.”

Sertorius instantly sent forward the lighter armed of his third Roman and fifth Spanish legion—some few Mauritanian horse—six or seven hundred archers and slingers—and commanded that Gitto, after having been refreshed and remounted, should hasten to follow them. This man's knowledge of the pass and of the

country around it, might be valuable. Then recommending to Perpenna the kind of convoy which should be despatched with other and more abundant supplies, he left the camp. It seemed of extreme urgency to anticipate the proconsuls. The higher part of the Tagus was not farther from them than from him, — and Libo might be lost.

If not the youngest, the most active soldiers in each legion, were the lighter-armed, and whenever the prætor was with them, they could accomplish marches, and dispense with the refreshments of sleep, and food, and shelter, to an extent which in our less laborious ages, would appear incredible. Such hardihood was the result of exercises which had no intermission, whether in the field or the camp — of the forest sports when hunting with him among the mountains, — and above all, of their pride in his presence. Jests and laughter permitted no time for the approach of weariness, and no distress through the indigestion of hard fare. “Let us march so fast,” said they, “that neither sleep nor hunger can keep pace with us.” Their commander was too provident to overtask such alacrity, and so gracious that he always required less labor than he endured.

On the present occasion, a dry north wind

following them from their mountains, quickened the pace with which they traversed those tedious plains—in summer so sultry, in winter so shelterless, at all seasons so desolate and disheartening. A few days brought them to the Tagus, and to a country, if more barren, less dreary. Hills and rocks, glens and thickets, arose on one side of the river; on the other reposed a vast leaden-coloured expanse, similar in its evenness to that which they had crossed already—but so abhorred by nature that no cultivation could quicken or soften its sterility. Yet did the eye gain from it some mitigation of offence. Obstinate, irreclaimable barrenness appears less melancholy than the feeble efforts of ill requited labor—the struggle which extorts nothing better for poverty than permission to live—and sometimes even than the unvaried and unadorned fertility where toil leaves its traces distinct enough, but transfers its recompense. There is space, there is freedom, there is expansion of heart and spirit—old thoughts recurring are not troubled by the task-master—the sun shines, and the gales breathe impartially—if the earth have nothing to give, she has no claims or expectations to disappoint.

His scouts, who had been dispersed in front, brought to Sertorius a goatherd from that side

of the river on which they marched, and where some scanty herbage might be browsed among stunted trees. He represented the pass as Gitto had done—as closed in by the river on one hand, and rocks perforated like a honeycomb with innumerable caverns, on the other. “The road,” said he, “while running under these dens and precipices, is unsheltered to an extent of little less than two thousand paces. Stones, not thrown, but dropped from them by their inhabitants, would crush a host the more speedily and inevitably if it consisted of giants. The river’s other bank is so soft, and loose, and treacherous, that beasts of burden cannot traverse it, and men, even without their arms, can hardly stand upon it. Those plains, always either dust or mire, which have no boundary as far as the eye can reach, are more fatiguing to the traveller than are sea sands when lightest, deepest, and dryest. If the prætor shall succeed in forcing his way, it must be by the customary road—by surprise—and after having seized upon some few of the crags and caverns which are least inaccessible. Such may be reached, and hostages selected from the families that inhabit them. Sertorius is not yet expected—the barbarians are occupied by their flocks and herds—his speed

has outstripped their vigilance — now is the time to press forward, should he persist in his enterprise — to-morrow will serve only for his retreat.”

Thus far was the counsel prudent — that nothing advantageous could arise from procrastination. The concealment of such numbers, in such a country, till next day, would be impossible. Sertorius had personally examined the river's opposite bank, and the plain beyond it. So fine and loose was the soil when dry, that every pressure of his foot crumbled it into the lightest powder, and every breath of wind dispersed it like unslaked lime, or ashes sifted from their cinders. There were four or five hours of daylight still remaining for a march which, at the present speed, could be accomplished in two or three.

But it had not escaped the prætor that his adviser was too prompt in urging dispatch; too skilful in his reasons for it; too easily found, and too eager in recommending himself as a guide; too sagacious consistently with his education among the goats; too ready, and voluble, and resentful in recounting his antipathies against these Caricatani, who had sometimes invaded his flock, at other times punished his remonstrances. There appeared preparation in his answers; his

arguments were methodical. Above all, three or four words were used by him; three or four phrases of greatest moment—precisely the same as those which had fallen from Gitto in the prætorium at Osca. Gitto had not yet arrived. Strange was the correspondence in language between this provincial goatherd, and a half-African mercenary from Bætica!

Intimating no distrust, the prætor placed his guide under the care of observant attendants, and hastened forward. There was a slight frost without wind—a sun hazy, sickly, moonlike, cold—a hard and even road on this side of the river, and at length, a country adapted far better to the adventurous than the timid. The rocks rose higher, their crags were interspersed with thickets which changed, but never quite lost the verdure of spring; ilex, holly, cork, fir, juniper, and yew. At every two or three hundred paces, a new curve presented some different scene wilder than the last. The river, in this part, had but few fords; and as it swept nearer and nearer to the rocks, its channel became deeper though narrower, its current more turbid and rapid, its vortexes more numerous and profound. Six or eight scouts, unarmed, and clothed as hunters, were dispersed in front, of whom not one had returned

a second time. Sertorius therefore could apprehend nothing like danger yet.

At the abrupt turn occasioned by a rock which first concealed his road, and then altered its direction, the prætor heard some sudden exclamations of surprise. The soldiers who preceded him stopped short, thrust or plucked back each other, and instantly looked round for him. While hurrying through their ranks, the words reached his ears, "It is the Fawn! halt! she may be scared away!" Upon a crag among the shrubs, there indeed stood this sacred messenger of Destiny, not farther off than half an arrow's flight, and direct in front! The dark green ilex bushes behind her, and on both sides, seemed to be faintly illuminated by whiteness so bright and glossy. Holding her head erect, she looked eagerly among the obstructed crowd as if for her master's helmet. As soon as the prætor, separating himself from his attendants, had advanced to meet her, she leaped down joyfully into the road below, and then into the arms which he extended for her reception. The soldiers gazed with reverence and delight at such a greeting. Their general carried his hallowed burden nearer to them—presented her as the harbinger of success—then remembering that its attainment must depend also on his own

dispatch, he would have returned her to the same crag.

She could be prevailed upon neither to remain behind him, to advance before him, nor to flee away from him. It was only for a moment that she disappeared among the thickets: as soon as her patron had resumed his march, she returned to gaze, she placed herself in his way, she obstructed his footsteps, and once more she leaped into his bosom. This obtrusive kind of friendship was quite inconsistent with her former bashfulness. It became embarrassing. Deposited again and again upon the ground, she refused to let him pass.

The soldiers whispered to one another that she must be prescient of danger—that it was not the promise of success which she would communicate, but the intimation of misfortune. However impatient of delay, Sertorius could neither despise his Fawn's warnings, nor—by appearing to disregard them—shock his soldiers' faith in her. The coy and timid creature had become obstinate. That he might learn what it was that she proposed, he stood still. Again she left him—bounded between the bushes—ascended to some short distance on the hill side, and selecting a

station whence she could both see and be seen, turned round as if she waited for his approach.

Sertorius commanded the archers, slingers, and all the mercenaries under Antistius to continue their march slowly, silently, watchfully, man by man, step by step: if attacked or resisted, to protract the combat, to advance no farther after it even if they were able, but as long as possible to wait for him. He then led the light-armed of his third and fifth legions toward the Fawn. She met him in a path not discernible till explored. It seemed to have been trodden bare by sheep and goats descending from the mountain pastures that they might quench their thirst. Triumphant in proportion to her recent distress, was the alacrity of his little guide, springing forward at one moment, stopping to look back upon him at the next.

The prætor and his followers, if less active, were hardly less impatient. Though steep and high, they soon found themselves on the summit, with nothing before them beside long, bare, rocky, ragged, sun-and-tempest blasted uplands. Here was no soil sufficient for a single bush. The entire surface abounded in hollows and hillocks, clefts and chasms. Looked at as a whole, it was one great plain; separated into parts, the inequali-

ties were infinite. Some ancient earthquake seemed to have shaken, broken, confounded, and thrown in heaps whatever was less substantial than the rocks beneath. Even that dusty region beyond the river was hardly so impracticable. Every minute, the traveller would have to descend some cavity, to climb some rock, to entrust his feet among splintered fragments or rolling stones.

On its extreme edge alone overlooking the road the river and the leaden-coloured plains, might something like such a path be found as was barely sufficient for the Fawn's followers hurrying and stumbling along it one by one. Sertorius, who went foremost, could see that the stream and the precipice approached still closer to each other—that, in many places, there was barely space enough for the road which ran between them—that the soldiers commanded by Antistius had advanced so slowly and heedfully as to be now no more than some little farther forward than his own—that the declivity under him, sheltered from the sun, and consisting of a deeper soil, was thickly covered with dwarf trees, and consequently better adapted to surprise. Still, as the scouts had not returned, he concluded that there could be no ambush or obstruction yet.

Hardly had he arrived abreast of his little army

under Antistius, when the whole hill side appeared alive—the bushes shook and parted—huge stones rolled between them in one place, bounded above them in another, pierced and scattered the loose array against which they were directed, and buried themselves smoking in the water. A tempest of darts and arrows succeeded—then a rush from their hiding-places by the barbarians, and amidst furious yells, a combat hand to hand. The strife was unequal, and could be sustained no longer than during a few minutes by the expectation of relief from Sertorius. A retreat was impossible. Yielding to force, against which there could be no successful resistance, as they had been instructed—both archers and mercenaries leaped aside from the stones, and then kneeling on the ground extended their shields before the arrows. But a loose file, so disjointed and irregular, gave free passage also to the assailants. The soldiers could then do nothing better than place themselves back to back in such small clusters as chance had collected. Every little assemblage repelled, with sharper swords and more skill, but also with the usual trepidation of surprise, five times its own numbers.

Sertorius restrains his legionaries during some few moments till the barbarians have expended

their breath and moderated their clamour. When it may be heard, he sends down, in addition to the blast from his trumpets, such a shout as reaches the combatants of both parties, notwithstanding the fury with which they fight. The shrubs and bushes that have concealed his enemies, now facilitate his descent. Passing through the thickets with celerity learnt in lighter sports than those of war, his soldiers arrive early enough to end the battle, though not to mix among its perils. Between two enemies, one of which appears to have descended either from the skies or their own hiding-places, the Caricatani are themselves surprised. Caught in the snares which they had spread for others, the plunderers are become the prey. Those nearest the fastnesses, inhabited by their families, fly at once. Some fight furiously, either because escape is impossible, or in the hope that, if they cannot conquer, they may revenge. A few spring back between the legionaries, finding refuge once more among the shrubs and bushes which had been so lately left by them. The far greater part swim, or try to swim, across the river, carrying away darts and arrows on their shoulders, not as spoils taken in battle, but as gifts liberally bestowed upon them at its termination.

Before his descent, Sertorius had discerned some Roman helmets dispersed among those goat-skin caps which were worn by the robbers. They might be armour taken from Titus Racilius and his slaughtered cohort, now ornamenting the heads of barbarian chiefs. "Strike the helmets first," exclaimed the prætor. His words flew from lip to lip. Every eye, as soon as it had ceased to be obstructed by the trees and shrubs, strained to regain a sight of these desecrated spoils. In vain would a few of their wearers have escaped across so swift a river swimming and sinking under such encumbrances. Enraged by the slaughter of Racilius and their comrades, and indignant that Roman arms should ornament the vilest, as well as the most insolent, among plunderers, the soldiers showered their missiles with threefold profusion after these.

As soon the tumult had subsided, Sertorius learnt that the arms of a centurion—no doubt of Racilius—were found among the slain. He approached the spot—he recognised the body which they covered: it was that of Racilius himself! In every other instance as well as this, the Roman armour encased a Roman soldier—a soldier from the camp of Perpenna—a legionary sent by him to secure the pass, to guard the convoy, to com-

municate with his late lieutenant Junius Libo ! Even the corpse of Gitto was found — Gitto, who should have followed Sertorius as his guide, and who had been indeed refreshed, remounted, and so hastily despatched on Perpenna's horses, that — with Perpenna's instructions — he arrived the first ! Here was treachery in which the barbarians appeared only as subordinates. The more accomplished instruments were from the prætor's own camp — pardoned criminals, fugitive slaves, emancipated gladiators, and till now unpatronised assassins. The centurion Racilius was the ally of these Caricatani — his soldiers their confederates ! Gitto, who carried to Osca a fabulous history of disasters affecting J. Libo's safety, had decoyed Sertorius under these bushy cliffs, where, through the Fawn's interposition, he fell himself.

The prætor now learnt that his scouts had been ensnared, not by the subtilty of barbarians, but by the artifice of their own countrymen. Their first steps into the pass made them prisoners. The goatherd too so far forgot his resentment against these plunderers and their ill-neighbourhood, that he fought valiantly on their side, and then drowned himself in their company. Here was treachery of which the prætor could entertain no doubt, and yet produce no witness. The

chief agents were dead—military obedience would justify such of the subordinate instruments as might survive. He foresaw that Perpenna would become loudest against the desertion of some soldiers under Racilius, and the consequent peril of others under Libo. So it proved. When the news had reached him, “Behold,” said this sage and moralist—“behold how speedily are matured the fruits of sedition!—of that mutinous apostacy which usurped my command and transferred eight legions from it to Sertorius! Libo has less reason to complain of Racilius, than I of Libo. Perjured men forget that their abandoned ensigns have been devoted to the Gods, and that their treason is also sacrilegious!”

Sertorius had been deceived by his colleague’s stratagem—he affected to be deceived by his indignation in disclaiming it.

The sun was setting. To have pursued the fugitives, would have been useless as well as perilous. Sertorius advanced no farther than was sufficient to ascertain that, at all hours, their precipices would be inaccessible. He reconveyed both his wounded and his slain to a more spacious area for the night’s encampment. A drove of cattle, with a supply of wine and bread, awaited him there.

At dawn the next morning, intelligence was obtained of a ford sufficiently shallow after so many dry days. Transferring his army across the river, the prætor toiled painfully back again, on its opposite margin, through dust knee-deep. Three or four hours were consumed in the accomplishment of as many miles. It was past noon when the soldiers had pitched their tents opposite to those caverns in which rapine felt so secure.

One continuous and perpendicular cliff, less curved than an archer's bow, and shaped rather like the grass scythe of a mower than his neighbour's reaping-hook, extended from point to point as much as seventeen or eighteen hundred paces. Three or four hundred cubits might be its average elevation above the river. Whether measured from its summit or its feet, the first fifty of these cubits were solid stone, either granite or as hard as granite; but all between appeared, not as Gitto had represented, regularly and uniformly cellular like the honeycomb, but pitted with shallow caverns as numerous, and also as unequal, as the texture of a dry sponge. Even had no such river run before them, they would have been unapproachable. An arrow aimed upwards must have arrived feebly and harmlessly, if at all. The barbarians had hewn no more steps or

passages, either from the ground, or from one cavern to another, than—as they said—their children might defend. Intercourse was maintained among them by the aid of ropes twisted from leathern thongs—of galleries suspended in the air, for which a single plank was wide enough—of larch and birch trees notched at regulated distances—and of such other similar facilities as might be, at any time, withdrawn. Sertorius observed moist stains upon the rocks—and in some parts, diminutive gutters, indicating that water trickled and filtered through their crevices. If he could have prohibited these savage people from the river, as was his first proposal, their thirst might be otherwise assuaged. As for more substantial sustenance, his own soldiers would have starved there in five days—his enemies might be sufficiently provided during as many months.

Racilius had chosen the proper part of these cliffs for his ambush. He knew that Sertorius would neither attempt to scale the more naked and precipitous rocks beyond—nor expose his soldiers during so much as a few minutes only, by advancing under them along the road.

So hopeless appeared the enterprise which he had undertaken, that, according to their temper,

some of the soldiers laughed gaily at his perplexities; others were discontent. "The prætor has set himself a task which he and his Fawn together must leave unfinished," said the first. "They will find it easier to besiege Metellus and Pompeius than these Caricatani. With the help of three thousand men, they have caught Gitto's body, and drowned the goatherd's."—"Gitto has not left us even so much as a lie which can be of any use," replied the others. "And yet without one, how shall we account, at Osca, for what we have done, and been unable to do? The prætor has invented no machines strong enough to batter down these cliffs. His good Fortune recedes from before them; and henceforth she will turn her face the other way. There are two prætors in Spain, and two proconsuls, but the most skilful general is the Fawn."

There was no disagreement in temper or opinion among the Caricatani. All were loud in their mirth, and of the happiest accordance in their derision. A large recompense in gold would be exacted for the blood of yesterday. They would accomplish more than Metellus and Pompeius together. They would make the prætor either purchase their forbearance, or hasten to escape their enmity. Those from

among them who had fallen yesterday, would leave the larger share, both of money and honor for the survivors. The cliffs rang with their shouts, their songs, their provocations, and their mockeries. Children clinging about them in clusters, like bees undetermined which way they should fly from too small a hive—and women neither subdued, nor much dejected, by losses which might receive an instant indemnification from some other husband or lover in the next den—interpreted their shrill cries with gesticulation equally opprobrious. If they had been looking down from the moon, they could have felt no greater security.

Sertorius had seen that the dust disturbed by his march, though not a breath of air assisted in its agitation, was long before it fell and settled again. So light was it as to be retained floating above the ground by its own buoyancy. He also knew that the north wind seldom slumbered more than three or four days in this season of the year—that the cliffs and caverns were ranged directly fronting it—that no rain or snow was to be apprehended while the sun retained its present color, or the air its dryness and keenness. As soon as his soldiers had been refreshed, they were commanded to collect this fine powder of

impalpable clay from beneath their feet; then, reversing and filling their shields, to approach as near with it as might be safely permitted by the range of their enemies' arrows, and to accumulate mountain behind mountain where there was a plain before. This exercise stimulated the mirth of the jocular. The serious labored the more eagerly that they might arrive at a solution of their perplexities. All the next day, they were gaily employed in smothering themselves and one another: for the prætor's smile rewarded their alacrity, and the river, with its ablutions, disencumbered them of the dust.

The barbarians were as little disposed to forego their share of the merriment. Seated idly aloft in that great theatre of rock seventeen hundred paces wide, tier above tier, they witnessed a comedy for the first time. Loudly and repeatedly did they reward the performers in it with their applauses, when some artificial mountain suddenly gave way, and ingulfed its builders chin-deep among their own materials. War often has its pleasantries; but here both parties might partake in them. The Caricatani reclined at ease as spectators of an entertainment which appeared to have been brought from so great a distance only for their gratification.

Sages highest in authority were neither the least delighted, nor the least noisy. Before sunset on the second day, some eight or ten of them descended, each carrying before him a small green branch denoting that he came with peaceful proposals. Ranging themselves on the river's bank, their selected orator loudly announced his colleagues as commissioners authorised to treat of peace. He demanded for them exemption from violence, and an interview with the prætor.

Sertorius, suspending the labor of his soldiers, advanced to the bank opposite. The ambassadors then intimated—with such seriousness as is intended only to veil derision coyly, not to disguise it effectually—that, if his tribute were sufficiently punctual and liberal, their tribes would grant him peace—that he might return unmolested—that the Roman prisoners whom they had enslaved might be redeemed at a just price—and that they would guarantee an uninterrupted passage through their territory for the prætor's convoys. They reminded him that a few days' delay must consign J. Libo to the proconsuls—that famine and fatigue would render the flight of himself and his own soldiers difficult, hazardous, and, if protracted, impossible. “It grieves us,” said they, “to witness so much

toil expended, after so long a march, in collecting dams for the river's obstruction, or hills for some ambitious rivalry with our own. We, as Spaniards, have no quarrel with Sertorius. Let him respect our rights, and acknowledge our sovereignty on our own soil by paying for his passage through it, and we will renew the peace. Should he wish to leave some visible memorial of his presence here, and of the league between us, we will, with our own hands, if justly remunerated, perfect the monuments which he has begun—though we cannot render ourselves responsible for their durability.”

Sertorius, in as distinct a tone, replied, “ That his soldiers never desisted from their labors till they had punished his enemies—that he would hear of peace when those who sent them had restored their plunder—surrendered both the prisoners and the deserters from his army—given hostages for their future good intentions, and submitted to Rome.”

“ All this we will do,” said the ambassadors, “ when the river is stopped, the dust hills are converted into stone, and the birds are your confederates.”

“ Without stopping or crossing the river, I will enter your caverns. I will convert this dust

into instruments of death more dangerous than stones ; and the birds which at all times precede me to victory, are here !” exclaimed Sertorius. So loud a shout followed this reference to their eagles—one from the third legion, and another from the fifth—that every soldier gained confidence through words which he scarcely understood—and the conference was ended by it.

Before morning the wind awoke. At break of day, it blew freshly and steadily from its old quarter. Sertorius, extending his little army along the river’s margin, commanded that every soldier should now disperse the dust which he had collected. He first filled a shield, and tossed the contents of it above his head. Not three minutes had elapsed, before the cliffs were become invisible. The wind carried this powdered clay against them and above them. It continued to increase, and with it the merriment of the soldiers. Notwithstanding their contumacy, they never really distrusted the prætor’s wisdom. While asking each other whether he could propose to dam up the river with dust—or to drown these robbers in their caverns eighty cubits above the ground—or to wage war, not army against army, but mountain against mountain—they knew that there must be some sufficient reason for what he did.

Now farther enlightened, all possible methods are attempted to thicken a cloud which veils the sun, darkens the sky, conceals the river, and stifles the air. If they sometimes suspend their toils, it is to chase and pelt each other, like children among the snow. The few horses which have been conducted so far—the mules tethered or impounded hitherto by sand higher than their knees—even the oxen ready there for the same night's supper—are all constrained to partake in this wild jubilee. "The Caricatani shall be taught to sneeze louder than they have laughed," said the soldiers; "we will block up their caves with dust. The winds have lent us their wings, and precede our eagles."

The winds blew and the dust accompanied them, as if pleased with the alliance. Sertorius could hardly recall a part of his soldiers for their refreshment, while he reminded them that, as they must continue the same exercise all night as well as all day without intermission, they should engage in it by turns. All day the dust thickened and quickened its column: all night the wind contended with the soldiers which should seem the most frolicsome, and make the most noise. For the first time in some thousand years, dust grew scarce.

The morning came, but it could cast barely light enough, through such a tempest of smoke and clamour, to astonish the soldiers by discovering among them several of those barbarian ambassadors—wet, naked, half-drowned, half-suffocated, and either prostrate or on their knees. They were such of them as could swim across the river notwithstanding the wind and the darkness: and they offered to yield all which Sertorius had formerly demanded, with as much more as he might impose. They supplicated nothing but mercy. “The dust had rendered life unendurable already: if their children should fail to awaken the prætor’s compassion, life must cease. The air they breathed, the water they drank—was dust. In a few hours more, the caverns they inhabited would become, not their houses, but their sepulchres. At that moment they were slaves. They had no stipulation to propose, no property to surrender—all was his. They asked for nothing else than a privilege which they had forfeited—the leave to breathe.”

Sertorius commanded his soldiers to desist. The barbarians were told that no additional concessions would be exacted from their misery—that they must surrender their prisoners, their plunder or its equivalent, and the deserters who had mis-

led them, with such princely children from every tribe as would guarantee their future fidelity. They were permitted to occupy the same caverns, not as robbers, but as allies. Such of them as pleased to visit Osca, were invited there that they might witness the tenderness with which his young hostages would be nourished and instructed by the prætor.

No former success had spread the superstitious belief in Sertorius and his Fawn more widely than did this. From battles and sieges—stratagems and surprises—victory was expected as an ordinary occurrence. This kind of warfare was new. The Spaniards now said that even Nature yielded to his genius—that Fortune and Destiny assisted in its illumination—that no enemies could remove themselves so far, or fortify themselves so strongly, or regulate their malice with so much cunning, as to be placed beyond his reach.

CHAPTER XIV.

ARGUMENT.

Torquatus and Aquileius. — Their Father, Ahala, the Pontifex Maximus. — His Dignity. — His Marriage with Lyris. — His Grief at her Loss. — His Flight from Miletus to Osca. — Repentance soon tired. — Gratitude soon exhausted. — Explanations between the Priest and the Prætor. — Spanish and Roman Children educated together at Osca. — Ahala's Alliance with Perpenna. — Gifts conferred upon him. — Money lent to him. — Repaid by the Disclosure of useful Secrets, which teach how we may dismiss our Friends and silence our Creditors.

AMONG many eager aspirants to friendship with the Fawn, Torquatus and Aquileius, the children of Ahala, succeeded best. Indefatigable in their solicitude to please, they studied her partialities and antipathies, they intruded no nearer nor oftener than she allowed. Fruit ripe and unripe, water from the fountain and the brook, goat's milk and cow's milk, cakes without salt, without leaven, and without either odour or flavour, were their offerings every day. The happier were they in her preference, because no jealousy could be occasioned by it to their competitors. She had selected the augurale for her hiding-place,

as that part of the *prætorium* which was the least disturbed—and they alone were privileged to enter it when they pleased. For Torquatus and Aquileius were the children of Ahala, and Ahala was the Pontifex Maximus.

Cicero, while pleading before the pontifices, attributes to them power greater than human—dignity and authority which must have encroached almost inconveniently on the divine. He tells them that the safety of the commonwealth depended on their wisdom—the freedom of the people—the fortunes of the nobility—and even the welfare of the Gods. Ahala, a patrician from among the most ancient families of the republic, estimated his importance as highly as the orator could have wished. Even in Rome, he thought himself hardly second to Jupiter. When Sylla became stronger than both, the Pontifex Maximus was ruined with the ruin of his party. He retired, first, to Achaia, and after his marriage with Lyrus, to Miletus.

Every account concurs in the beauty and the gentleness of his wife. She was too fair, and too virtuous, even for a Pontifex Maximus. His love may have become the more constant and passionate because it could extort no reciprocity. The unhappy Lyrus felt incapable of any tenderer

sentiment than reverence for so great a man. By degrees, even the reverence, which should have been its equivalent, grew as unsubstantial as the love. At an age too early for choice, Lyris had been given in marriage by ambitious parents. Ahala, whose habits in Rome were polluted by all its worst vices, carried with him no better morals from Greece to Asia. Such as are usually thought incongruous, were combined in him. For he was cruel and careless—rapacious and wasteful—profligate and imperious. The Pontifex Maximus was an Epicurean in the most corrupt signification of that word. Lyris soon understood that Jupiter's high-priest believed in no God at all. Even the wicked, if they are courageous, despise hypocrisy. She who was good and timid, trembled at it. She bore him these two children, Torquatus and Aquileius: and yet, fondly as she cherished them, the young mother was eager for her escape, and glad to die.

Chastity is a provocation to lust; and the most licentious may love and reverence the innocence which they cannot pollute. Ahala became the idolater of purity, in which, till now, he had never believed. His passion for Lyris would have grown weaker if it had been returned. Never did he love her tenderly or innocently till

in her illness; or so uncontrollably as at her death. For a season, his heart became humanised by misery. Miletus grew hateful to him. As a place of refuge from Sylla and the public indignation, it would soon have become unsafe. He hastened to Sertorius with his children, as to the great protector of all who were unhappy.

After remorse and other good feelings had yielded to time, or temptation, or the inextinguishable depravity which he rather stimulated than indulged, there was no decay in his love for Torquatus and Aquileius. His passion for their mother had been less tender, and not much more ardent. Now first, in forty years, did he find a holy pleasure which it was meritorious to gratify. No other parent, in the camp at Osca, was equally anxious to screen his children from the presence, or the knowledge of vice. Not in his own pavilion, but in the augurale of Sertorius, was their abode. Though much too young to be numbered among the contubernales, they had access there as partaking of their father's priesthood. The augurale was open to none of the other noble attendants on Sertorius—to them it belonged in common with the Deities whose ministers they were.

Ahala knew that Sertorius was so far familiar

with his history as to despise him. However highly his office might have been venerated by the orator, the general humbled its pretensions, and more than once threatened its excesses. If, as Cicero declared, the Gods themselves depended on the discretion of their servants, there was the greater reason why their servants should be discreet. For their sakes, prudence and modesty were indispensable in the absence of better things. It was far from desirable that the Pontifex Maximus should scandalise a great camp and a crowded metropolis. Nor did Sertorius consider it conducive to the public advantage that the march of his legions should depend on any other will than his own. Ahala's presence—giving, as it did, the countenance of religion to men who were in arms against their country—was so far profitable. No doubt his high dignity had its political uses among the most superstitious of mankind. But he would have grown dangerously powerful if, assisted by the flight of his birds, he might have appealed to the entrails of his victims. It was too much that the same person should undertake the government of both worlds, while he dishonored the one, and discredited the other. Sertorius therefore intimated his pleasure, that, when some enterprise was in hand, the chickens

should peck up their barley with a better appetite—the bran and the frankincense should kindle rapidly, and burn clear of smoke—the priests should be less economical of their oil, the augurs more of their prodigies—and the diseased livers, if they must occur, should be accompanied by sounder hearts. He preferred that ill omens should be communicated to him, rather than to his soldiers. Above all, and as the most effectually persuasive, the prætor advised that no more epistles should be written by Ahala either to Metellus or Pompeius—the last having fallen into hands for which they were not designed.

So charitable was the Pontifex Maximus, that he had commenced a correspondence with his enemies. The asylum given him by Sertorius in his affliction, had been converted from its compassionate purposes to those of conspiracy. He not only wanted money—but a reconciliation with Rome, that he might resume his duties in the capitol. For Osca was becoming hardly less inconvenient as a residence than Miletus. He had contracted an unenviable character there, and debts to an amount which only his creditors dare calculate. These epistles to Metellus were in the scrinium of Sertorius. The detected traitor found that high pretensions were become unseasonable

—that if he would recover the prætor's good humour, his birds must fly in a better direction, and his beasts must approach their altars as if proud to partake of the sacrifice.

When Sertorius intimated all these wishes to the pontifex — the pontifex to the augurs and aruspices — there was immediate acquiescence, even among the cocks and crows. It was by rare skill that some of the prætor's most dangerous subordinates became, at last, his best agents. An honest interpreter of omens would have taken no pains to procure good ones. Ahala was so far of Cicero's opinion, that he believed the Deities to be as dependent on him, as he on the Deities — and therefore, while laboring for their common interests, he preferred his own. After some of his epistles to the proconsuls had miscarried, others were written by him with the same superscription, suggested by Sertorius. These had better fortune — for they arrived safely.

In the same proportion as he became poorer, did he become more desperate and profuse. His pavilion shone with oriental splendour, and was so crowded by foreign inhabitants — singers, dancers, flute-players, comedians, buffoons, and courtesans — that he had no room in it for his children. In the augurale, a part of the prætorium,

nothing ever occurred unsuited to its sanctity, and they were welcome there. It seemed that the unhappy Lyris had been able to leave them, as a compensation for her lost tenderness, every thing else which young mothers the most desire. They inherited as much of her beauty, and grace, and gentleness, as could be transferred to childhood. Before grief and terror had faded them, her cheeks were less ruddy, and her eyes could not have been more lustrous. Even if its purest blood had remained unmixed, Greece could have produced no better specimens of the human form appropriated by the Deities, and animated with celestial affections.

Their father loved them with the greater pride, because never did they remind any one of himself. He was unwilling to suppose that his own childhood could have been thus playful, or its temper thus gentle. For if so, how terrible must have been the depravity which had accomplished such a change! He wished to behold them as the children of Lyris—affectionate and gracious like her—generous and forgiving—fearful of displeasure and offence, yet not of death. The atheist believed that there was something of divinity in her and them. Nor was there reason to suspect his judgment of partiality, since the whole camp con-

firmed it. In every legion were Torquatus and Aquileius as well known, and as much beloved, as its ensigns. They had for their instructors every soldier of the highest reputation in its own department. They were taught to shoot their arrows, to hurl their javelins, to brandish their swords, and to drive their diminutive chariots, by masters pre-eminent in such exercises, and proud of their proficiency. Even their little competitors could feel no envy; for victory never triumphed, and all contention ended in mirth.

Sertorius had collected at Osca many thousands of noble children from various cities and provinces. He furnished them with teachers of Grecian and Roman literature, and of such sciences as might best qualify them for the public service. He often assisted in their studies, and by personal examination ascertained their proficiency. Some were afterwards rewarded by him with honorable commissions in distant countries; or with offices requiring prudence and intelligence, in their own. Others, at a proper age, received the high distinction of Roman citizenship. The most able and active supplied such vacancies in the Spanish armies as continually occurred. But the honor coveted by all, and which he reserved for the strongest, the bravest, and the faithfullest — was

derived from a knightly custom peculiar to Spain and Gaul. These were adopted as children into a band which fought the nearest his person — his guards at all times — his associates, whether in victory or in death. It was an offering of their breath and blood, which they called a libation. Other generals had some such attendants. Sertorius found it doubtful which to select from the myriads that presented themselves. He furnished his young warriors with abundance of gold for the decoration of their helmets, their breastplates, and their shields. He encouraged the love of magnificence as a step from barbarism. Even in their childhood, he commenced the process of civilization by intermingling splendour with bravery, and knowledge with splendour.

At certain hours of the day, gay but stately and almost interminable processions filled the Oscan streets. They consisted of noble children, Roman and Spanish, on their way from the gymnasium, to some teacher of rhetoric — or from Archippus the Syracusan mathematician, to Trophimus the stoic. The Grecian poets and philosophers were read familiarly at Osca, and there was no longer any perceptible difference between the Spanish tongue and the Italian. Golden ornaments, called bullæ, hung from many a neck, to

which they had been attached by the hands of Sertorius. The Spanish princes were delighted to see their sons in gowns bordered with purple, and accompanied by the patrician children of Rome.

Among all these thousands, Torquatus and Aquileius held undisputed pre-eminence. Learning seemed to offer itself unsought. They inherited the two languages of their parents; and they had never found more toil in any other kind of instruction, than in the games which concluded it. The most jealous of their companions had no emulation with Torquatus and Aquileius, by whose gentle and unambitious tempers rivalry was disarmed. Happy was he that could retain the place nearest at their side, however much he suffered by comparison with them. Noble mothers, who had assembled that they might witness the return of their children when some teacher's school was dismissed, permitted them to pass by unregarded, while one contended that Aquileius was the most fair, and another maintained that Torquatus was the most graceful.

It seemed as if the Fawn possessed some portion of the same discernment. She, at least, preferred voices so gentle, playfulness so temperate, and ministrations so kind. Shy as she was,

she ate small portions of what they brought her. It was the boast of Aquileius that she had once placed her head against his shoulder; and of Torquatus, that she had suffered his united hands to span her neck. If they envied any one, it was the prætor, who carried her in his bosom, and from whose approach alone she never retired.

Perpenna contrived to pass the colder months so agreeably that he regretted their termination. Much as he valued his prætorship, he preferred ease to labor, and authority without trouble, to long marches through barren or barbarous countries in pursuit of danger. The ancient rivalry with Hannibal continued ardent as before. His imagination amused itself with dreams of conquest, vengeance, and Italy. As long as peril was distant, no forethought discouraged an enterprise which might confer upon him universal sovereignty — but Metellus and Pompeius were at hand. He designed, therefore, to supersede Sertorius in his command, and to leave Orcilis, with the other confederate princes, as legacies for the free disposal of the proconsuls. Accompanied by fourteen Roman legions, and with five or six from Spain, he felt courage enough to encounter his creditors. It was high time to think of his country, and replenish his finances.

We find it difficult to believe in the imperial opulence of several Roman patricians during that and the preceding age — of aqueducts built on arches eighteen miles in length, by private munificence — of baths, theatres, temples, triumphs, donatives — of armies maintained and fleets equipped, and even the public exchequer relieved; yet all insufficient to exhaust resources the well-spring of which no one can ascertain. Perpenna had passed the winter in prodigality rather than magnificence. His bounties were indiscriminate, and so far impartial, that the soldiers of Sertorius partook in them at least as freely as his own. In all disagreements with the Spaniards, he displayed his patriotism, regardless of justice. Great was his paternal tenderness, when any iniquity had been detected, or any disorder had been repressed, or any criminal had been punished. He undertook for other people what for himself he had never proposed: he fulfilled their promises; he paid their debts; he pitied the sorrow of their wives, and provided for the destitution of their children.

That power by which wealth can attract luxury and its effeminacies from distant countries, has never been exceeded since. The vestibulum of his pavilion had folding-doors inlaid with tortoise-shell. Its atrium was paved with mosaic figures

of Homer's Olympus. Waxen masks, the images of his ancestors, ornamented its cornices as incentives to virtue. The panels were divided from each other by marble busts, marble shields, and portable columns of marble. The panels themselves shone with agate, jasper, porphyry, and other precious stones more costly still. Perpenna had not depended on the skill of provincial artizans for his elegances; they followed him ready prepared, from sea to sea, and country to country. Wherever he might be established, their accumulation was immediate. His halls were crowded with tables of cypress, and couches of cedar. Silver lamps stood upon the wings of fabled monsters, all different in their workmanship, and all rare. Beside innumerable vessels from Greece and Asia, there shone large golden bowls and vases, the rims of which were studded by precious stones, descending to Flaminius from the Ptolemies, and to the Ptolemies from Darius.

Perpenna and the pontifex maximus had been familiar in Rome. The prætor now found his old associate as luxurious, ambitious, rapacious, and imperious as ever. Habitual discontent had not grown less gloomy since their separation, after twelve years of disappointed pride and malignant sensuality. He had become so poor, and had shown himself to be so faithless, that he could

borrow no more. It seemed as if the waste of his finances and his credit augmented his expense. The utmost exactions of usury were succeeded by pledges retarding his ruin only from month to month, but not securing his exposure against infamy and punishment even during a single day. Perpenna and his friends had an occasion for their generosity which might escape if delayed. The pontifex maximus received from them all those good things of which he had too many before — buffoons, comedians, musicians, courtesans, parasites, and cooks. Aufidius transferred to him a girl of surpassing beauty from Ephesus, who required privileges and indulgences more costly than his own finances could prudently gratify — among which was a lectica, attended by sixteen slaves, and preceded by two players on the flute.

At last, large sums of money were — not given like the other commodities, but — lent by Perpenna. For eighty talents, there should be security of some kind. The pontifex maximus swore! He swore that, if he might once more seat himself in the Capitol, rather than neglect the payment, or forget the obligation, he would melt down Jupiter in a crucible.

Rome was the Elysium both of Perpenna and Ahala. It was while looking to Rome alone

that their pious ruminations could sooth themselves with riches, honors, authority, and revenge. Perpenna grew daily more eager for the enterprise. What else was wanting to its success than the command of those nineteen or twenty legions which he had reckoned upon so long? Ahala, with less confidence, had stimulants still more sharp. He could stay no longer where he was. Another embarrassment occurred to perplex him worse than that of debt. As the price of their assistance in baffling justice, he had entrusted alarming secrets to Perpenna, to Aufidius, to Umbrius, to Mæcenas, and to Rufo. Thoroughly did he understand that not one of these new allies had ever retained the confidence reposed in him longer than was consistent with his convenience or caprice. But justice was at the door — necessity is as strong as fate. Ahala had brought with him from Asia some kinds of occult learning previously unknown in Spain. His skill extended to the mysterious properties of certain minerals and vegetables. He could do in ten minutes what neither Machaon nor Æsculapius could undo in a hundred years. By arts, suspected indeed, but little understood, he had removed one of his oldest friends, and more than one of his chief creditors. Luxurious as were

his entertainments, cautious persons, though free from asceticism, preferred a worse supper elsewhere. When Perpenna knew this, he reflected that it was now his own good fortune to occupy the first place in the same relationship — both of friend and creditor. He intimated to the pontifex — that confidence should be reciprocal — that, on his side, there had been gold and protection — that if money were supplied for Ahala's occasions, such Asiatic simples, or philters, or whatever we may call them, should be administered less selfishly than heretofore. He too might possibly have a friend for removal: his creditors at present, indeed, gave him no concern. But it was not impossible that the prætor and the pontifex might concur in selecting the very same person for this potion from Miletus; and if so, why should they retain their reserve?

These two Epicureans had, in their bosoms, soft places of credulity. As for Ahala, the superstitious atheist believed every thing preternaturally proposed, except his religion. A compact was concluded amidst bloody mysteries and impious sacraments. There were enough of imprecations, though no Gods to hear them.

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